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The Week

IN STRIKING contrast with its record of last year, the Supreme Court presented the administration with a clean slate of ten victories and no defeats in decisions on New Deal laws rendered this session. The final score was chalked up with the validation of the Social Security Act. This fact, combined with Mr. Justice Van Devanter's retirement, gave strength to opponents of the President's plan to change the Court—a plan, however, which may have had something to do with the curious reform of Mr. Justice Roberts, converting five-to-four against to five-to-four in favor. . . . Simultaneously with the last decision, the President asked Congress to revive the NRA to the extent of a federal law regulating maximum hours and minimum wages, and barring from interstate commerce the products of the labor of children under sixteen. . . . In spite of pressure from those who want more economy in relief and from those who want less—or perhaps because of this triangle of forces—the House passed the President's bill for $1,500,000,000. . . . The Senate refused to accept the decision of the House limiting the life of the CCC to two years; a conference committee will have to thrash out the issue. . . . German experts testified that the burning of the "Hindenburg" was due to a gas explosion ignited by a spark from static. . . . The CIO continued its sweeping campaign of organization by winning the election in the Jones and Laughlin steel plants and concluding an agreement with the company, signing with Crucible Steel, preparing to do battle against the still reluctant Inland, Youngstown and Bethlehem companies, and laying siege to Ford at River Rouge. Meanwhile the A.F. of L. met in delegate conference to plan resistance against CIO encroachments. The delegates could think of little better than calling names and raising per-capita dues.

BRITAIN continued with agitation of her plan for a truce in the Spanish war, withdrawal of foreign troops and, if possible, a negotiated peace, but with slim chance of success. . . . While the important Catholics, apparently with the official approval of the Church, continued to support the designs of Mussolini and Hitler in Spain, Hitler and the Church were engaged in a bitter conflict in Germany. Charges of immorality were pressed against nuns and monks. When Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago denounced the Nazi dictator in strong language, Germany protested both to the Vatican and to Washington, but without result in either case. (Strangely enough, the Germans seem to persist in believing that our government can muzzle prominent individuals.) . . . Russian scientists landed at the North Pole and prepared to send regular weather reports. Secret trials and executions of alleged Trotskyists continued in the Soviet Union, one mass trial being reported from Siberia and another from Georgia. . . . The imperial conference opened in London. In the House of Commons Neville Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, soon thereafter to become Prime Minister, prepared to force down the throats of his conservative supporters in business the hated excess-profits tax to help pay for rearmament, a proposal but little altered in response to the drum-fire of criticism to which it has been subjected.

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THE Supreme Court, in its final important decisions of the session, upheld the social-security law. Seven of the nine thought the old-age-pension section constitutional, while only five voted to validate the unemployment-insurance tax of the federal government and state unemployment laws passed in conformity with the federal statute. Three important realms of controversy are influenced by the decisions. First is the question what effect, if any, this action, combined with the others of the past months validating New Deal legislation, will have on the President's proposal to change the composition of the Court. Certainly it will reduce the pressure for the change, but logically the shift of a single Justice is a weak reason for abandoning Court reform. Second, interest is aroused in the question of how far the powers of the federal government are extended by the new precedent. Apparently it can now use taxation for social purposes, but only within strict limits, and only if the purposes are clearly within the province of the federal government, or if the several states explicitly consent. The decision adverse to the AAA still stands. Finally, the issue of the merits of the Social Security Act itself is raised again. Congress may go ahead to improve and extend it without constitutional qualms. There certainly is a good deal of room for improvement.

THE decisions upholding the validity of social-security legislation give particular point to a report of a special committee of the Twentieth Century Fund which has made an exhaustive study of the specific provisions of the present laws. The committee points out the inadequacy of monthly pensions which average slightly less than $19 over the country as a whole, whereas in most American cities an income of $30 to $40 a month for aged single persons and $50 to $60 for married couples is "barely enough to maintain an acceptable standard of life." To give states an incentive toward more adequate payments, the committee suggests that no federal grants should be made to any state unless the average pension in that state amounts to at least $12, and that the federal grant be two-thirds of the total needed to pay such minimum pensions. Beyond $12 and up to a limit of $30 average pensions, the federal grant should be "one-half of the total additional amount above the amount needed to pay $12 average pensions." The fact that under the present plan contributory retirement benefits do not become operative until 1942 causes the committee to recommend that beginning January 1, 1939, initial benefits should be paid to workers who attain the age of sixty-five and who have earned not less than $1,000 since 1936. These benefits should be raised from the present $10 to not less than $20 per month. The committee would further provide supplementary benefits to wives and widows. It calculates that present payroll taxes are more than ample to meet the increased costs involved in its recommendations and decries the building up of an enormous reserve.

RUSSIAN aviators and scientists landed in the ice floes at the North Pole, announced their intention of broadcasting meteorological reports to the world, and presented the Pole to the Soviet Union. Admiral Peary had previously given the Pole to the United States, although the President in acknowledging the gift had replied that he did not know what to do with it. Now the Russians say that Peary never reached the Pole, while the American State Department gracefully intimates that since the ice merely covers an ocean, according to international law the Pole cannot be annexed by anybody. Such quarrels about territory are supposed, according to tradition, to lead to war. But if pioneers of any nationality have the hardihood to fly to the top of the world, land on the drifting ice, live there permanently, and use their conquest for the purpose of improving the world's knowledge of coming weather, we for our part would be willing to have the army and navy sent to keep them from being driven away.

ORDERS sending Department of Justice agents into Harlan County, Kentucky, will test the mettle of the much publicized G-men in a way that few assignments could possibly do. J. Edgar Hoover's boys are accustomed to fighting criminals who, individually or in gangs, work by stealth. In Harlan they will find the most brutal criminality openly subsidized by powerful mine owners, they will encounter murderers and professional artists in mayhem wearing the badges of law and order. These facts were amply brought out in the recent hearings before the La Follette committee on civil liberties, and Attorney General Cummings' order of May 19 comes as a result of those hearings. The federal agents are thorough, and if they have to pursue murderous deputies and mine guards on such unlikely charges as income-tax evasion, it is because the state is powerless to clean up the appalling conditions within her own borders. Governor Chandler's lack of spine with regard to Harlan County has been a keen disappointment to friends who expected better of him. The La Follette committee, primarily concerned with interference with union organizers, dealt only with developments during and since the NRA period. Before this there was the bloody "battle of Evarts" in 1931, and four victims of the frame-up that followed the battle are still held in prison. Forty-six of forty-seven living jurors have signed a petition for their pardon. The least Governor Chandler can do is grant it.

A COMMITTEE of the American Association of University Professors has now reported on the dismissal of Jerome Davis from Yale, which was discussed at length in a special supplement to The New Republic ("Yale on Trial," November 18, 1936). This report, made by a group whose chairman was Professor A. N. Holcombe, of Harvard, is much less forthright than the statement of the American Federation of Teachers (discussed in The New Re-

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public of May 12) which was based on an investigation by another distinguished group of university professors, and there are inexplicable differences between the two. Nevertheless, the report of the AAUP is a damning indictment of Yale, the most serious group of charges against a leading institution of higher learning that has been made by this body in many years. The report says that were it not for the hostile attitude of President Angell, the Board of Permanent Officers of the Divinity School would probably have made Dr. Davis' appointment permanent. The committee states that the president's attitude was influenced "by alumni criticism of Dr. Davis' public speeches and other activities outside the classroom" although it "has found no conclusive evidence" that this was "the sufficient or decisive consideration" in creating the president's opposition. The Yale Corporation is exonerated on the singular ground that it merely acted in conformity with the recommendation of the Faculty Board of the Divinity School. The committee finds that the latter body was wrong in taking twelve years to make up its mind whether Dr. Davis should be permanently appointed. The AAUP report was received only as this issue of The New Republic was about to go to press; we shall discuss its findings at more length in a later issue.

LEON TROTSKY has made a public statement describing the activities of the Fourth, or Trotskyist, International. It has, he says, "tens of thousands" of members, in thirty countries. He himself holds no official position; its activities are guided by a secret bureau of ten or twelve persons. He denies the charge made by "Augur" in The New York Times of May 5, that the gold reserve of the Spanish government is being used to support the Fourth International's activities. On the contrary, he insists that the Spanish loyalists are Stalinists; while there is a branch of the Fourth International in Spain, it is only two or three months old, and "must as yet be very small." The "Trotskyists" are working with great vigor, he says, in all the countries with fascist or reactionary governments. Declaring that the Third International and the present government of the USSR have betrayed the world revolution, he expressed the hope, according to the Associated Press, that both the government and the International allied with it will be destroyed by the new group. If Trotsky's statement has been reported correctly, it casts a new light on the Moscow trials and helps to explain the frantic hunt for Trotskyites in Russia.

MISS Grace Abbott, Dean of the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago, uttered some wholesome truths about government relief in her opening address as president of the National Conference of Social Work, meeting at Indianapolis. Miss Abbott says the action of the federal government in withdrawing from direct relief has caused chaos and a collapse of the relief program in many areas. She states that the distinction between home relief and work projects is a meaningless one, and that federal money might as well be used in the former as the latter. Operations under the Social Security Law in many parts of the country are being made an occasion for political patronage, jobs going to incompetent politicians and money being wasted while destitution continues. If you add the expenditure for the CCC, $500,000,000, to the proposed $1,500,000,000 for federal work relief next year, the total is still less than half of the $4,500,000,000 which, she says, we are paying every year for past and future wars. We wish, but without much hope, that her remarks might receive in Washington the attention they deserve.

WHEN Mr. Paul V. McNutt was nominated for Philippine High Commissioner, the appointment aroused considerable protest. Progressive people said that he had shown himself to be an ardent militarist and a lukewarm democrat, hardly the right sort of person to represent the United States among our little brown brothers who are so soon to be no more than our little brown cousins, if that. These predictions now seem to be well justified. Hardly had he landed at Manila before he issued two official pronunciamentos. One of these told the consuls of all foreign powers that any communication with the Island Government must be cleared through his office. The other stated that when public toasts are drunk, the order of precedence must be President Roosevelt, Commissioner McNutt and then the President of the Philippines. Technically, Mr. McNutt may be correct, but in every other sense he is as wrong as wrong can be. The Filipinos, remembering with nostalgia the tact of the last Commissioner, Governor Frank Murphy of Michigan, are talking of boycotting all official functions at which Mr. McNutt is present. Even if we intended to keep the Philippines bound to our chariot wheels forever, McNutt's action would be extremely indiscreet; since we are in process of setting them free, it shrieks to high Heaven.

AN INTERESTING comparison of the intellectual attainments of children of laboring families and children of well-to-do families was made by Dean J. B. Johnston, retiring head of the arts college at the University of Minnesota, in his recent Cap and Gown Day address. He first pointed out that the arts college, on an average, received only one boy or girl from a laborer's family for every 1,600 adult laborers in the state, whereas it received one son or daughter for every 21 men engaged in banking, one to every 24 in general business and one to every 315 men engaged in farming. Despite this discrepancy in making higher education available to the children of workers, Dean Johnston said that "From 1931 to 1935, of the children of the well-to-do 42 percent became successful students and 6.5 percent secured honor standing. Of the children of the poor, including those who received federal aid,

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58 percent became successful students and 15 percent secured honor standing." Dean Johnston had a kind word for federal aid as a means of supplementing private employment for students who seek to be self-supporting but can't always find jobs available. "Without federal aid," he said, "about 1,300 self-supporting students would have been denied higher education. Yet from this group has come the highest ratio of good students. More than twice as large a percentage of them as of students from well-to-do families have gained places on our honor roll today."

THREE writers and a camera man are collaborating on what promises to be the most honest and one of the most interesting war films ever made. The writers are John Dos Passos, Archibald MacLeish and Ernest Hemingway. The camera man is Joris Ivens, who recently came back from Madrid with about 15,000 feet of film selected from more than 30,000 that he had taken under fantastic difficulties. He spent much of his time in the front-line trenches and in machine-gun posts; he filmed attacks, counter-attacks and airplane raids with special attention to the lives of the common soldiers and to the every-day business of war as opposed to its hurrah and heroism. Starting with a scenario, he soon abandoned it and took what the camera saw. It is his intention—and that of Hemingway, who is doing the spoken comment—to avoid politics and present the film as an accurate record of what people do and suffer during a period of military rebellion and civil war.

ABOUT a fortnight ago, Drew Pearson and Robert Allen unearthed what they regarded as an important piece of news for their widely syndicated daily column, Washington Merry-Go-Round. This was that Hearst had offered Postmaster General Farley a position at a salary of $200,000 a year. Mr. Farley sharply refused the offer and Mrs. Farley, when she heard of it, remarked "Tell Mr. Hearst that we're not Roosevelts." The Pearson-Allen column is distributed by the United Feature Syndicate, which is one of the group of loosely allied Scripps-Howard enterprises. When that day's material was sent out to the subscribing newspapers, the authors were startled to learn that the Farley item had been omitted—all but the last sentence or two of comment on Mrs. Farley's attitude which, with extraordinary clumsiness, had been left in. Pearson and Allen promptly circulated a letter of their own to the editors buying their column, pointing out that no one had questioned the accuracy of their story and reporting that Hearst representatives had been trying to get it suppressed. The interesting fact about this little tale, to us, is that neither the United Feature Syndicate executives nor the Hearst officials—journalists all—realized that attempts at suppression would merely result in added interest in the news and in the publication of comments on their action. Like this one.

IN ITS issue of last week The New Republic incorrectly reported that Voroshilov, Commissar of Defense in the Soviet Union, had been demoted: It was of course Marshal Tukhachevsky, First Vice-Commissar of War, who was thus disciplined. We extend our most humble apologies to all concerned, including our readers.

The New NRA

IF IT were announced in any other industrial nation in the world that its legislative body had been asked by the executive to pass a law establishing maximum hours and minimum wages of labor, the news would be far from startling. In fact, many nations have had such provisions for years. Britain's wage boards for sweated industries have been in operation so long that they are taken for granted. The movement for legislation limiting hours was embodied in the League of Nations program immediately after the War; draft conventions have since been ratified by many countries. The only new aspect of the President's proposal is that now for the first time the United States government seems to have the constitutional power to pass laws of this kind. It did attempt the same thing, to be sure, under the NRA, but that attempt had never previously been made because of constitutional doubts; the law was invalidated after it was passed, and only the recent decision upholding the Wagner labor-relations law, coupled with the prospect that the personnel of the Court will be changed, makes the prospect brighter now.

This suggestion embodies the principal element of good contained in the NRA, omitting the bad. It will be remembered by those who have studied the origins of that agency that it arose from a demand for a congressional limitation of hours, to which was shortly added, at the suggestion of students of the subject, a proposal for minimum-wage boards in industries that needed them. This simple program would undoubtedly have gone through Congress if important representatives of employers had not demanded power to deal with prices and trade practices as an offset to the wage-and-hour regulation. The final legislation expressed a sort of bargain, by the terms of which employers said, we will raise wages and limit hours if at the same time we are allowed to eliminate "cutthroat competition" and increase prices so that we can meet the higher costs. Thus, with rising wages and price boosts we can all soar to prosperity.—How it all worked out is a matter of history, but competent students are agreed that the worst possible policy is to bestow upon private profit-seekers the legal right to increase prices and limit production, as the NRA in effect did. If maximum hours of work and minimum wages must be bought at such a price, they are not worth having, for private industry can and will take away in selling prices what it gives in wages and hours. No edifice of enlarged employment and

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higher standards of living can be built on such a basis.

There will undoubtedly be other differences between the application of this legislation, if it is passed, and the NRA. That was supposed to be an emergency measure, to be applied universally and quickly as cure for extreme depression. It was expected that a general and drastic cut in hours would enlarge the number employed, while a nationwide minimum wage would stop competition at the expense of labor and increase popular purchasing power as a stimulus for trade. Now, although there is still a large total of jobless, the trend of both employment and wages is upward, and there is time to apply the regulation more carefully and with more attention to the needs of particular industries and regions. More important still, the administration of the NRA proved again what the experience of other nations had shown, that real and permanent gains could be made only when labor organization was strong enough and well enough led to achieve good conditions and enforce them in practical administration. With the growth of organized labor under the stimulus of the CIO campaign and the Wagner Act, much of the burden of establishing gains for labor will be removed from government. The law will become an accessory to the normal progress of enlightened industrial forces rather than an attempt to apply a blanket cure.

The general theory of legislation of this type is well established. Strong and progressive unions lead the way in improving conditions of labor. More advanced sections of the country and of industry are always ready for gains, provided conditions are favorable. But there are other industries and regions where, for one reason or another, unions cannot make much headway, or severe competition prevents localized advances, and where as a consequence the conditions of labor lag behind the general standards. It is desirable to aid the workers in these sweated industries for their own sakes. It is also desirable to bring the laggards up nearer the main procession, so that they will not pull back the van. In these areas legislation, applied equally to all competitors, can help. National laws are necessary to offset interstate competition and stop the "runaway shops" that so often cross state borders to escape state regulation. On this basis state agencies dealing with wages and hours in local industries can safely be erected. The whole idea is not that laws of this kind can establish general gains for labor, or that they can lead the way into new territory, but merely that they can help to bring the more backward sections of industry into line with the gains already made elsewhere.

This is an extremely useful, but not a revolutionary activity. It is far from accomplishing the ambitious aim of abolishing unemployment and raising the level of living throughout the country. It works slowly, moderately, and in a piecemeal fashion. Those who hope that by passing a law to raise wages and shorten hours we can suddenly achieve the best potentialities of modern technology and usher in a regime of plenty are certain to be disappointed. Even if tomorrow all wages could be doubled and nobody were allowed to work more than thirty hours a week, we should still be suffering from the present degree of economic disorganization, if not from a worse one.

Higher labor costs would limit employment and would promptly be translated into higher prices. Any effective attempt to deal with the problem as a whole must necessarily involve controls that will be capable of keeping prices down while wages advance, of increasing production and sales while hours are shortened. Such an attempt would have to reckon with a great many complex technical and economic factors. Still more important, it would have to exercise in the name of society many of the powers now thought to be inherent in private ownership of the means of production. The constitutional power to pass laws regulating wages and hours does not include the actual ability to alter quickly for the better the material conditions of the whole body of American workers. Such a goal cannot be gained until industry is operated expressly for that purpose, and even then the end cannot be achieved without a high degree of knowledge and skill in the social administration of our productive forces.

John D.

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, whose heart finally stopped beating early on the morning of May 23, was the perfect laboratory specimen for several outstanding problems of American life. In his middle years, he was a predatory capitalist of the most ruthless type, who not only employed great organizing talents but crushed his competitors by fair means or foul, mostly the latter. His actions precipitated much of the forty years' struggle to enforce "fair competition" by law, a struggle that still goes on and is still far from a satisfactory conclusion. He was also the chief example of the multi-millionaire who seeks to give away his money in socially useful ways. In the course of a quarter-century, his benefactions exceeded half a billion dollars. Particularly noteworthy were the gifts to the University of Chicago, the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research and the Rockefeller Foundation, one of whose chief tasks was to spread abroad in the world the discoveries made at the Institute. Aided by shrewd advisers, Rockefeller did better with his philanthropies than most of his competitors in the art of giving; yet the tide of social opinion is today setting more strongly against permitting such vast fortunes than when he began.

In his latter years, he illustrated another remarkable social phenomenon, the art of the press agent. When the late Ivy Lee went to work on him, he was one of the best hated men in the country. Lee, with abilities that might have been turned to more useful account, changed the popular concept from a sinister

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figure into a harmless, amiable, indeed almost comic old man. The Lee campaign may have helped to sell more gasoline for the Standard Oil Company, but so far as Rockefeller himself was concerned, it would have been better to let him alone; the victorious pirate had more dignity than the half-grotesque aged figure distributing his dimes after Sunday school. People never really learned to like him in either of his incarnations as they like, for example, Henry Ford. Perhaps they felt, correctly, that the automobile man had a true inventive spark, that he set civilization forward. Rockefeller invented nothing; he merely turned an abnormal talent for acquisitiveness into a field—the marketing of petroleum products—that happened to be expanding enormously. The final feeling of futility which is the net impression left by his career is the futility of an era dominated by such figures as his.

The Proposed Spanish Truce

ON THE eve of the League of Nations meeting this week to grapple with the Spanish question, another strenuous attempt has been made to deal with the issue through the Non-Intervention Commission. The proposal is that a truce be called during which all foreign troops in Spain would be withdrawn. The war would then continue unless, of course, the truce were made the occasion for a negotiated peace, presumably giving something to both sides. Toward this proposal each nation has its own special attitude; the simplest way to evaluate the scheme is to report the position of the most important powers.

The chief proponent of the plan is Great Britain. For almost a year, the British Tory government has blown first hot and then cold in regard to the Spanish war. On the whole, it has wanted the rebels to win, although from time to time this attitude has been affected by fear of Mussolini's vaulting ambition or alarm lest Germany apply against London at some future date the lessons in aerial bombardment learned in the skies above Madrid. The English have also, of course, been marking time in regard to Spain and everything else, until their rearmament program was substantially completed. Observers around the world have not been slow to point out that Great Britain procrastinated in this matter until, just lately, the cause of the rebels began to go very badly indeed. Now once again they are bringing forward their proposal for a "neutral" regime in Spain headed by a safe conservative like Madariaga—a regime that would be equivalent to fascism without the fascists.

The Spanish government is reluctant to accept the suggestion of a truce, for at least two reasons. The first is the one already mentioned, that the rebels have proved unexpectedly feeble in recent weeks. The second, which is far more important, is that the plan for a truce might have fatal effects unless it were carried out honorably by all the parties concerned. Unfortunately, Germany and Italy have thrown away their reputations by their past conduct. Nobody any longer believes that they will do what they promise. Everyone assumes that they might agree to a truce and the evacuation of their soldiers, and then suddenly attack.

There is no doubt that Hitler would like very much to get out of the Spanish mess. It is costing him a huge sum that he cannot afford and there is rising discontent at home, particularly among the leaders of the regular army. He evidently feels, however, that he cannot quit without Italy's consent.

There is also no doubt that the Italian dictator regrets his rash enterprise. He can afford it no better than Hitler; he, too, is disturbed by the rising discontent in Italy. It would rise still higher if his troops came home beaten. Yet he might save himself by diplomatic triumphs elsewhere. Being a hard bargainer as well as a reckless adventurer, he is, in all probability, setting a high price to Germany for his possible final agreement to quit—a price including concessions in Central and Southeastern Europe.

Three things are now fairly clear in regard to the Spanish situation. The first is that if by some miracle, all the foreigners on both sides could be got out of the country, the government would probably win a prompt and decisive victory. The rebel cause has been kept alive only by the masses of men and materials poured in by Hitler and Mussolini. The second is that the famous blockade applied a few weeks ago, after such long delay, is a farce, at least so far as the rebels are concerned. They are still getting nearly all the assistance their fascist allies care to send them. The third is that, even as things stand now, a victory of the government seems probable unless the aid from Germany and Italy is suddenly and very largely increased. All the flourishing rebel promises that they would take Madrid months ago, would eat up Bilbao within a day or two, proved wrong. There is some question whether Hitler and Mussolini can buy a rebel victory at any price; and certainly they cannot do so except for a huge sum. The problem is whether the German and Italian people can be compelled to pay it.

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A Year of the CIO

WHEN John L. Lewis appeared recently on the convention platform of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union he was greeted by shouts of CIO! CIO! CIO! that sounded, people said, like the throb of giant machinery. Just nineteen months before, he had stood on this same platform and pleaded in vain the cause of industrial unionism before the A.F. of L. convention. Now he had come to the conclusion that the American Federation of Labor was a liability and not an asset to any real labor movement, and that the CIO had no need and no desire to make a tardy peace with them. He did not wish to have anything to do with an organization whose president had during negotiations advised first General Motors and later Chrysler not to sign agreements with the striking workers.

His speech in Atlantic City was a formal announcement that within the past few weeks the Committee for Industrial Organization had entered its third phase. It had regularized its position by stepping out as a separate labor center, issuing charters to state federations and central labor bodies. It now claims an almost equal membership with the A.F. of L., fulfilling the prophecy that Lewis made this spring to the Chrysler workers.

Less than a year ago the CIO launched the steel drive and with that launching appeared as a formidable labor force. No one, including the CIO itself, could possibly have foreseen the successes of the past year. Its program was to organize into industrial unions the vast army of unorganized workers and at the same time to make them conscious of their political power. Its creed was voiced by John L. Lewis in his first radio speech to the workers: "There is a mighty upsurge of human sentiment now being crystallized in the hearts of thirty million workers who clamor for the establishment of industrial democracy and a participation in its tangible fruits."

The CIO has in a few brief months recreated the labor movement of this country. It has already organized 1,250,000, in addition to its original members. The applications for charters pour in at such a rate that it is impossible to issue them fast enough. Each day in the Washington office of the CIO you see such a stack of mail, announcing thousands of new members, that no definite figure is available. The number of internationals affiliated with the CIO has grown from its original eight to twenty.

The activities of the CIO for the past year have touched the President of the United States and the Supreme Court, have crossed the border into Canada and have caused a volume of argument that for its divergent and violent opinions is unlike anything since Abolitionist days. A new conception of property was invoked when the striker quietly sat by his machine with the mute implication: "This job is mine. You have taken from me my tools and my control of the machine, but I have a vested interest in this machine. It is my job. It is all I have and all that my wife and children have and I will protect it with my life."

Shifts of thought have occurred during this struggle whose full implications are not yet understood. New conceptions of ownership begin to arise, involving not the transfer of property from one class to another, but the incomplete recognition of a change that has already occurred. The legislation of this country has shown a progressive recognition of this changed conception of ownership. Through labor laws and the control and regulation of stock markets and utilities the country has by implication asserted that big business is public business.

A tremendous breach has been made in the walls of the open-shop employers. Not only steel, but autos, rubber, aluminum and flat glass have capitulated to collective bargaining, while inroads have been made in transport and the utilities. Two of the biggest open-shop cities, Pittsburgh and Detroit, have been almost completely organized, with many A.F. of L. unions also growing in membership as a result of the CIO drive.

Sitting in his office in Washington, John Brophy traced what he terms the three phases of this development as exemplified by the CIO. He held that the overwhelming vote for Mr. Roosevelt in 1932 was a mandate from the people to do something about conditions that caused the depression. Brophy said:

"The NRA was the attempt to grapple with these problems, to strengthen labor's position and to gain a better balance from the forces of industrial life. Labor's hopes were aroused. Signal successes were achieved among mine workers and garment workers. There was an upsurge in the unions that made an effort to provide an adequate machinery for organizing the unorganized. In the mass industries such as rubber, autos and steel a large new membership arose.

"Inside the A.F. of L. forward-looking leaders maneuvered to modify the musty policies inadequate for coping with a great organizational drive. In the A.F. of L. Washington convention in 1933 efforts were made in this direction, but nothing much was done. In the San Francisco convention the next year a more vigorous effort was made toward adequate forms of organization. A formula was worked out to serve as the beginning of a great organizational drive in certain industries.

"Power to administer such a program was lodged in the executive committee, which neutralized and rendered this program null by its interpretation. This precipitated the classic struggle between those

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who were for having something done and those who were for doing nothing."

At the Atlantic City convention this struggle came into the open and was crystallized in the speeches made by John L. Lewis and by Charles Howard of the typographers' union. The conflict reached its climax when blows were exchanged between Lewis and Hutcheson, who typifies the reactionary force of the A.F. of L. This convention ended the first or parliamentarian stage, in which the progressives earnestly tried for successive years to adapt themselves to the framework of the A.F. of L.

The second organizational phase began. Following the Atlantic City convention the CIO was set up on November 9, 1935, with a membership of eight international unions. One of the first things they did was to enter the auto industry to unify the splintered elements of the federal unions and federal groups. The auto workers' unions, which had flourished under the NRA, had later disintegrated because of poor leadership and an inadequate form of organization.

It is interesting to note here that the unions which had the industrial form and good leadership, such as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the United Mine Workers, kept the gains they made under the NRA, while in the new unions, such as rubber, autos and steel, the membership had dwindled until there were only hundreds where once had been thousands. The CIO cut through old conventions, took the shards of unions that had been given their original impetus by the NRA and had almost died from disillusion, and made them into a vital force.

The first chapter of the CIO was written by rubber. From the beginning the power of this new form of organization was established. Representatives of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the United Mine Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Oil Workers, all loaned organizers to the young union and helped to establish the smoothly running strike machine. Their presence was evidence of the solidarity and power of the labor movement. Here were foreshadowed the new strike techniques that were to reach new heights in autos.

One of the Amalgamated organizers told me recently that the use of radio prevented a serious conflict that might easily have ended in massacre. "Goodyear," he said, "had openly organized mobs, and when reports came in that the mob was to march on the union, we engaged a radio station from eleven at night until eight in the morning and told our forces to stand by their radios while we gave them news of what was going on. All night we entertained those listening with songs, music, speeches and messages on support, received from as far west as Colorado."

Tents were extensively used—so far as I know, for the first time—to shelter pickets. Men watched day and night around the eleven-mile circuit. There were picket captains for each group of ten. "Better housing programs" brought radios, couches and safer stoves to the shelters. The settlement also showed the unprecedented strength in negotiation that such an organization as the CIO can develop, since it pools all its accumulated knowledge and its brains. As Goodyear hesitated, it was pointed out from Washington with authoritative figures how vast a consumer market for auto tires the workers represented.

The radio and electrical workers who had tried unsuccessfully to make some arrangements with the A.F. of L. were next in order for organization. The electrical workers in their own words were "rebuffed" by William Green. They were told that they would be given only the rating of a "B" union. As a "B" union, their big local at Westinghouse with its 6,000 members would have had but one vote in the convention, whereas unions with "A" rating are granted one vote for every 100 members. After earnest efforts to organize in the A.F. of L. were unfruitful, they decided to affiliate with the CIO. The ship-building trade also tried to affiliate in the only form of organization suitable to it, that of industrial unionism, while the A.F. of L. pursued the policy of trying to split the shipbuilders into craft unions. They eventually joined the CIO, as did the flat-glass workers, whose drive the CIO supported.

June 1, 1936, saw the beginning of the steel drive. Its first great meeting was a dramatic one. It occurred in Homestead and was held in memory of the steel workers who were killed by the Pinkertons in the famous Homestead battle of 1902, which ushered in U.S. Steel's relentless war against unionism. All free assemblies had for years been denied Homestead workers. Now they were addressed by the Governor of a great state, who promised the workers that their civil rights would be safeguarded. It was an impressive and solemn meeting, and it was shortly followed by John L. Lewis' speech over the radio on July 6, in which he addressed the steel workers and other workers throughout the country.

The workers came in hesitantly at first, in a mere trickle compared to the flood that was to follow, but with a Governor favorable to labor and a Lieutenant Governor who was an old mine-union member, the steel towns where "Jesus Christ could not hold a meeting" were now open. As a symbol of a new day, the SWOC offices were placed conspicuously on the main streets of the steel towns. Their central offices in Pittsburgh were on the top floor of the Grant Building—streamlined offices that overlook the Golden Triangle between the rivers.

Meanwhile, the A.F. of L. bureaucracy was squirming under the continued successes, the evidence of power of the CIO. By July the unions affiliated had grown from eight to twelve. Then in August the executive committee suspended the affiliated unions of the CIO, charging dual unionism and defiance of the majority rule of the Atlantic City convention.

In November came the second phase of the steel drive, with a conference in Pittsburgh of all the

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SWOC organizers. Wherever steel was being organized the SWOC offices became the center of all union activities, as the SWOC helped to organize the A.F. of L. craft unions also. Take the tri-state area, for instance, of Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky, with Portsmouth, Ohio, for its center. Here occurred one of the bitterest fights between the union of the Amalgamated Iron, Steel and Tin Workers and the company unions. After the coming of the SWOC, not only was the breach healed, but by August the delegates to the Central Trade and Labor Council had increased from seventeen to something like twenty-nine, with five other unions waiting for the SWOC to get time to organize them. The fullest coöperation existed between the CIO and A.F. of L. groups. In this district something like a labor revival occurred, a quickening that canalized the young workers' enthusiasm into unionism.

On the first of January, 1937, just as Governor Murphy was being sworn in, the auto workers began their famous sit-down strike. On February 11, General Motors settled. On March 2, U.S. Steel bargained with John L. Lewis. By the middle of March, two huge unions, each with a membership of over 300,000, were the twin pillars of the CIO. They had pursued divergent courses. Each had been equally successful. Steel pursued a campaign of organization quietly while persuasion and negotiation went on behind the scenes. Autos followed a militant, aggressive policy from the first.

At this writing there is a concerted effort of the great independents led by Republic Steel and E. T. Weir's National Steel to block negotiations with the SWOC. Their ranks have already been broken by Jones and Laughlin coming to terms; nevertheless, a great steel strike threatens. But nothing can undo the fact that U.S. Steel has bargained with labor.

The United Auto Workers' union achieved its success through some of the most remarkable demonstrations of mass action that this country has ever seen. No one who saw them can ever forget the emotion, the beauty or the restrained power in the spontaneous victory demonstrations in Flint.

Since then the Textile Organizing Committee has begun its drive, with the first offensive in New England. The regional director of the South, Steve Nance, has just quietly announced a membership of 100,000 for the first month's drive. Shoes, oil, traction workers, seamen are being organized, or voting in blocks to leave the A.F. of L. for the CIO. Thousands of white-collar workers are being organized by both the CIO and the A.F. of L. The onward march has only begun: the movement of the workers is far from being at its peak.

While these great organizational drives were going on, labor also entered the political field. Through its efforts the political complexions of whole states were changed. Labor again overwhelmingly gave its mandate to the New Deal. Those who watch labor's progress feel as though labor in the past, by limiting its political action, had been like a man stumping along on one leg. With political action added to activity in the economic field, labor now runs fleetly.

It is interesting to note that while the A.F. of L. was suspending the CIO unions the two factions continued to coöperate in the political field through Labor's Non-Partisan League, and still do so, with officers of the League pretty equally distributed between the CIO and the A.F. of L.

Some strange actions must be charged against the A.F. of L. Perhaps the most notorious of all company unions is the "Blue Card" Union, which in the tri-state area of Kansas, Oklahoma and Missouri opposed the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, now a CIO affiliate. The Blue Card Union was officered by thugs and manned by strikebreakers. Yet this union has been chartered by the A.F. of L. Its members were armed with axe handles; they attacked and wrecked union locals and beat up scores of union workers. At last the union men defended themselves. Nine Blue Card men were wounded.

Again, in East Pittsburgh the Electrical and Radio Workers have organized 6,200 of the 8,000 Westinghouse employees. Of the old company-union officers all but sixteen of the fifty-seven have gone over to the new CIO group. The A.F. of L. sent in an organizer and gave a charter to the remaining sixteen officers and their small following.

The A.F. of L., by expelling CIO members from the central labor councils and state federations, has split the labor movement and caused a labor battle in every industrial center. Yet so great has been the driving force of the CIO that the A.F. of L. itself has been quickened out of its historic somnolence. Its membership has increased 445,179 since last April. It has taken lessons from the CIO. The Machinists' Union has spread rapidly in aircraft, which it is organizing along industrial lines.

Labor has emerged with a vastly increased prestige, a new status. A new dynamic force has been born whose impetus is beyond anything known before in the labor movement. No one has as yet analyzed the full implications of recent labor history. We only know that a new social climate has resulted. To this changed status the upholding of the National Labor Relations Act by the Supreme Court has contributed. The appalling revelations of the La Follette committee have shown the astonished public what weapons employers use to prevent organization—including murder. But the Supreme Court decision, the National Labor Relations Board, the La Follette committee, a President favorable to labor aims, would all have been in vain without the forward thrust of labor itself.

Because of this year's experience a new evaluation of labor's place will have to be made. From now on historians will have to concede to the organization of labor its place as one of the great processes of democracy, only now arriving at a tardy maturity.

MARY HEATON VORSE.

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The Spanish War of Words

MY CUBAN friend, Pablo de la Torriente, is dead. A volunteer for the loyalists in the present Spanish civil war, he was killed in battle on the Escorial front.

He fought not merely with rifle in hand but also with words. In the last communication I had from him, he told how every night he shouted the message of the republic into the loud-speakers that carried his voice to the enemy trenches of General Franco.

Don Pablo believed in the Spanish loyalist cause. He had no love for tyrants or for rule by armed force. As a student in Cuba, he had opposed the despotic Machado regime. In the fighting his head had been gashed open by a mounted soldier's saber and he had been dragged off to the Isla de Pinos penitentiary. Later he fled into exile in the United States. In New York he worked as a waiter in a Spanish cabaret on 110th Street. He organized the Cubans here against the new military dictatorship of Batista. When the Spanish civil war broke out, he devoted his energies to raising funds, supplies and volunteers for the loyalist cause. One good day he disappeared. The next I heard he was himself in the trenches.

On the Escorial front, as elsewhere, the government militiamen set up powerful loud-speakers, and between battles, and especially at night, they would attempt to persuade the Franco forces, the members of the Foreign Legion and the Moors to desert to the loyalist ranks, to cease fighting their brothers. "Kill your officers who have fooled you, and come over to us. There you are just cannon fodder. Here, you are fighting for your land, your homes, your fellow Spaniards." Such were the words.

Pablo de la Torriente was a good speaker. The enemy soldiers could tell by his accent that he was a Cuban, and they liked to listen to him. They came to expect the nightly harangues as an agreeable interlude in the murky business of lying on their bellies in the trenches and the grime and sweat of fighting. And soon after night fell and the mess kits had been scoured out with sand, they would shout, "Let the Cuban talk."

Perhaps more than in any other war, the printed and spoken word is used today in Spain along with bullets and often more effectively. Loud-speakers bellow from the trenches. Leaflets are showered over opposing lines by airplanes, by paper balloons, by rockets and in a dozen other ways. Months ago the Franco forces started to drop showers of leaflets over Catalonia: ANARCHISTS: WHY ARE YOU FIGHTING TO HELP YOUR ENEMIES THE COMMUNISTS? THE COMMUNISTS ARE HIRELINGS OF MOSCOW. THEY ARE THE ENEMIES OF SPAIN. HELP US SAVE THE FATHERLAND. And it would seem that perhaps this propaganda in part explains the recent anarchist revolt in Catalonia in the rear of the loyalist lines.

The Popular Militia, the newspaper of the front-line trenches, December 29, 1936, describes a Christmas Eve broadcast by the Sixth Brigade:

> The Political Commissar came with a large loud-speaker hunting for the best place from which to speak to the revolters. It was necessary to demonstrate to the fascists that our vigilance in guarding Madrid is daily stronger; that our morale, unbreakable, is a morale of victory.
>
> The words of the Commissar boomed through the night:
>
> "Boys! Here fell more than 15,000 of you. . . ."
>
> The "International" was played and then "The Youth Guard." The two songs were heard by the opposing files, respectfully, without a single shot being fired.
>
> The speaking began again:
>
> "You have been fooled. You are a blind instrument of the fine gentlemen, of the militarists, of the capitalists who have always exploited you and who are now making use of your blood to complete their labor of crime and destruction, cannon fodder to fatten their purses and increase their privileges. You are treated like dogs; you don't eat. . . . But we go happy to battle; we have liberty and democracy; we lack nothing and our chiefs are our fathers, our comrades. Come over to our ranks. . . ."

The loud-speaker is moved from point to point. It is finally directed toward the walls of that redoubtable edifice, the University Clinic, which had so heroically resisted all attempts at capture. There an isolated group of rebel fighters had held out against artillery and crashing walls and every form of modern assault.

This time a reply came back: "Listen, Communists: here is fascism! One of the Tercio, the glorious legion that in 1921 saved Spain so much bloodshed, is speaking to you. You are cowards: you are not even Spaniards, because the Russian gang has fooled you. . . ."

The Government Commissar replies:

> Listen, Spanish soldiers, fooled by the rabble, sold out to Hitler and Mussolini! The popular army of the democratic Republic speaks to you. We are the honored sons of the people, and the one who spoke from your ranks is one of the petty officers who is leading you to slaughter, a pistol at your backs; he is a type who has lost his backbone from bowing and scraping to his masters. Look well at such types. With his kind you will merely have a lash over your heads. But listen you, fascist lackey: Where do you get that patriotism stuff, you who are giving the Balearics and other regions to the hosts of Hitler and Mussolini? You call yourself patriots, you who bring in Moors, Italians, Germans to assassinate the noble Spanish people? . . .

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On another night, a group of volunteers sneaks over the top of the trenches, and there in no-man's land, under a dark cloudy sky, they plant white flags to the staffs of which are tied bundles of propaganda literature. In the morning the enemy soldiers creep out and retrieve them. The regulations are strict that none such be fired upon.

Many of the militia companies are provided with slingshots. The government proclamations are wrapped around small stones and hurled behind the opposing front line. On another day, when the wind is just right, the sky is frequently dotted with hot-air paper balloons. These are so arranged that after a time the flame will burn through a cord, which releases leaflets over the countryside. From a distance they look like a shower of spring petals.

Skyrockets that carry long distances are also utilized; sometimes the leaflets are tied to the stick, at other times they are so arranged that they shower out in true Coney Island effect.

At random I select phrases from the propaganda:

KILL THEM!

Soldiers of the forces of Mola, Cabanellas and Franco!

Soldiers who have been dragged to the front by force, bribed, fooled so miserably by generals sold out to a contrabandist! [This refers to the millionaire speculator, Juan March, now in Italy, actively representing the Franco forces there.]

Kill your officers. Let all the hate accumulated for generations of oppression cause you to lift your bayonet and bury it in the heart of those assassins.

Kill those traitors who wish to flatten millions of Spaniards, millions of your brothers, under the military boot.

Another reads in part:

FOREIGN LEGIONARIES:

A handful of traitors to Spain, of generals and lords, thieves and bishops, of bankers and crooked speculators, have unchained the civil war that lashes our country.

These people want to suppress the liberties that the Spanish people succeeded in winning at the cost of the blood of thousands of martyrs. They want a fascist Spain, dominated by plutocracy and finance, by lies and by reaction. . . .

Legionnaires of the Tercio! We are fighting also for your liberty. Many of you long to return to your homes. Others wish a less hellish life than that imposed on you by the African generals—those revolting generals, traitors to the fatherland, who are leading you to slaughter, utilizing you as cannon fodder, to defend their selfish interests! They utilize you because they lack Spanish soldiers, for most such have passed over to our side, refusing to shoot down their suffering brothers. This is why they utilize you, out of desperation, knowing they are headed for certain defeat.

Come over to our side! Kill the generals and officers who force you to fight against the Spanish people! . . .

Long live the Republic! Down with the band of stuffed generals who wish to assassinate the Spanish people! Long live the defenders of the Republic!

Still another reads:

SONS OF SPAIN:

The traitors who have violated their oath are drenching the soil of our Fatherland with blood. To buy arms they have sold pieces of our land to foreigners.

The immense majority of the Spaniards are standing against them. They wish to take Madrid, but in Madrid even the women and children are fighting to defend it.

They will be annihilated because treason cannot triumph. . . .

Another leaflet carries a bold cartoon of a group of militiamen taking prisoner a bloated general, dressed in gaudy uniform with exaggarated moustachios and a long trailing sword. It is from the front page of The Daily of the Fifth Regiment of the Popular Militia and reads:

COURAGE, COURAGE AND MORE COURAGE!

Soldiers! Follow the example of your Galician comrades who have rebelled against the treason of those who are no longer their superiors. The assassins, the felons, the traitors have no moral authority to command troops of soldiers born of the conscience and flesh of the people. Comrade soldiers: Do not have traitors for officers!

Other leaflets are printed in Arabic and are addressed to the Moorish soldiers:

MOROCCANS:

The generals are those who have always injured your folk. The Spaniards consider you their brothers. . . . The men of Spain will receive you with affection. The Moroccans who have come over to our side live well and happily. We do not wish to kill, we wish to live with our brother Moroccans without war. Come to our side. Don't fight with traitors. The entire Spanish people is prepared to fight against those who go against the Republic. And our people number millions of men.

The generals have murdered many of your women and children. . . .

The leaflets emphasize the fact that those who desert the rebel cause, if they do not wish to join the loyalists, will be permitted to work behind the lines, will receive food and privileges. Often such leaflets are sent over to the enemy lines with packages of food or tobacco to make the appeal more concrete. Men who have deserted from the rebel ranks or who have been captured and won over to the other side are utilized to send messages back to their former comrades. I have seen leaflets bearing the photograph and photostatic signature of such. One, signed by five men, reads in part:

COMRADES:

We were soldiers of the Battalion of Cazadores de Cerinola A-n-6 enlisted in Tetuan. . . .

Comrades: on the 20th we made a pact to pass over to the Army which defends the legitimate government of Spain and the interests of all the workers and peasants.

We are in Madrid beside our brothers. . . . Before, we hardly ate. Here, since the interests of all are the same, since we are fighting for well-being, for land

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and liberty, all are brothers. We eat well and abundantly. The soldiers are workers who have taken up arms to defend their interests. The chiefs, too, are workers or officers who conduct themselves with us as comrades.

Soldiers: Imitate our example. Abandon the criminals who defend the interests of the bankers, the landlords, the militarists, of Germany and Italy.

An official report on deserters states: "By means of the deserters, we have learned the dinner hour of the enemy officers, so that we have been able better to take advantage of the best moment to send over our leaflets." To facilitate such desertions, a special type of rocket is utilized which tells the enemy that at such moments if he escapes across no-man's land, he will not be fired upon.

Another type of human leaflet is utilized. When trenches are abandoned by the government forces, they leave behind in them either wounded or prisoners who have been especially well treated. The wounded in such cases have been given proper medical treatment, clothing and plenty of food. A report reads: "This method of leaving the wounded well cared for when our troops have retired and the enemy occupies the trenches evokes in the latter great surprise, and when they discover that we respect the lives of our opponents when they are in our power, it produces great excitement and demoralizes the opposing forces."

Blood still drenches the soil of Spain. Artillery and airplanes smash up great historic cities. Foreign powers intervene. But behind all the horror and terror is the greater battle of ideas. The ultimate battle ground will be in the hearts of the Spanish people. And regardless of the high-powered bombs, the rattle of machine guns, the death of men, women and children, regardless of foreign intervention, either now or sometime in the future, the cause the Spanish people identify as their own will be the eventual victor. Eventually out of the smoke of battle will arise the system of life the Spanish people basically desire. And for that reason, perhaps, the battlefront of ideas, crudely though they be expressed, is more important for the future of Spain and perhaps the future of Europe than the long line of trenches from Escorial, where my friend Pablo de la Torriente died, along the Guadalajara road, past the gates of Toledo and down to Valencia in the South. The loud-speaker battles the cannon for supremacy.

CARLETON BEALS.

Diary of a Worrier

1903.

THIS MAN Roosevelt is turning out to be not the safe solid fellow that Mark Hanna told us he was. He has approved of a crazy idea in Washington that would limit children's work in factories to an eight-hour day and a forty-eight-hour week. Surely it is a great deal better for them to be kept out of mischief doing something useful and educational in a factory. Besides, American industry could never survive it. We would be undercut on price by factories abroad which work the children as long as they think proper, with none of this interference by a lot of ignorant politicians.

Elkins has got through his nonsensical bill saying that a railroad can't make a rebate to a specially big customer, but has to treat everybody exactly alike. This is socialism pure and simple, and the country will never stand it.

1906.

A long-haired nut from Indiana, Albert J. Beveridge, actually has the impudence to propose that child labor should be prohibited. He doesn't know what he's talking about. I worked as a boy, helping out around my father's office, and it did me good. What does this fellow Beveridge want? Children running wild in the streets and growing up to be criminals?

1908.

I can't think what's the matter with the Supreme Court. They have approved an infernal law in Oregon saying women shall not work more than ten hours a day. Business can't go on with all this interfering. The Oregon factories will just move to some other state, and these women that are so fussy will be out of a job entirely.

1909.

Well, thank heaven, Teddy the Trust-Buster is out of the White House and a good riddance, say I. We'll never hear the name Roosevelt around Washington again.

Congress is talking about the most outrageous idea in our history. They actually suggest that the federal government should tax a man's personal and private income, just to get money for those greasy fat politicians to spend. I don't suppose they will ever go through with it, but if they do, I and every other decent citizen will leave the country.

1910.

Agitation has started in some of the states for several pieces of the maddest folly the mind of man can conceive. They are talking about laws under which employers would be taxed and a workman would receive what they call compensation if he were accidentally injured. This in spite of the fact that as things are now, all a workman has to do is to bring suit against his employer, prove that he was not guilty of contributory negligence, and often get quite a large sum. Socialism, that's all this idea is, and if it goes through, the country is on the way to ruin.

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1911.

Have they gone crazy in Illinois? They've passed a law actually paying a kind of salary to a woman with children if she has no means of support. If this law stands, you'll find healthy women, capable of holding a job, who will just sit around and let hard-working taxpayers support them. I'll bet they'll even adopt children, or maybe kidnap them, just so as to get in on this easy graft.

1912.

I can't imagine what they are thinking of, up in Massachusetts. They have gone and passed a law setting up a minimum wage for women and children working in factories. They tell a man what he has to pay his help, but do they give him the money? Not on your life. The factories, of course, will just move to other states where a citizen still has some rights. Ten years from now, there won't be a wheel turning in Massachusetts if they keep this up.

1913.

This long-haired professor from Princeton that has got into the White House is taking the country to hell in a handcart. He has jammed through Congress a terrible thing called the Federal Reserve Act, putting the government right in the banking business. Just socialism, that's all it is. It interferes in the private affairs of the bankers, one of the finest bodies of men in this country. I was glad to see that only three members of the Republican Party voted for it in the Senate.

A lot of these weak little Western states, populated by failures who drifted out there from the East, have finally ratified this amendment providing for direct election of Senators. Everybody knows that the common herd can't be trusted to pick good men for such an important body. We were getting on all right, with Senators chosen by the state legislatures, which have at least a modicum of sense.

These small Western states have done something even worse. They have ratified another amendment authorizing a federal income tax. The government can reach right in your pocket and take out money, just for nothing at all. The new tariff act says they shall collect one percent on your income above $3,000 if you are not married and $4,000 if you are. Nobody can stand a tax like that. Think of it! —$160 a year on an income of only $20,000. Lots of my friends are going to move out of the country.

Wilson is talking about a general reduction in tariff. Everyone knows that our prosperity depends absolutely on a high tariff and that, without it, we shall be ruined.

1914.

This fellow Wilson gets worse and worse. He has put through a bill for a Federal Trade Commission that can meddle in your private business in all kinds of ways, provided you are in interstate commerce. They can even publish confidential figures off your books. This is the end. You'll find that people will refuse to do business outside their own state, rather than submit to these snooping Paul Prys from Washington.

As if that weren't bad enough, they've passed a thing called the Clayton Act designed to prohibit monopolies. It just puts a premium on incompetence, trying to keep alive feeble businesses that might better be killed. This Act says labor is not a commodity. Then what is it, I'd like to know?

A few years ago I thought rather badly of the Supreme Court, which handed down several regrettable decisions, but I am glad to retract now. If it weren't for the Court, I don't know what we'd do. Arizona passed a crazy law saying that old people who had wasted their money and had no support, should be taken care of by the state, right in their own homes. That's a definite premium on idleness and improvidence. Thank God, the Supreme Court threw it out the window.

1916.

The government is going to lend money to farmers under something called the Federal Farm Loan System. This means that the banks in farm areas will have to close their doors, for lack of business. The farmers will borrow from the government and then sit around and live on it, and agriculture will be ruined. Just another of this fellow Wilson's crack-brained socialist ideas. He's put through Adamson's law for an eight-hour day on the railroads. Would I have got where I have if I had worked eight hours a day and then gone and played pool or smoked cigarettes?

This fellow Brandeis has been nominated for the Supreme Court. He's just a Socialist from Boston who has done nothing but make trouble for the legitimate business interests up there. Of course he won't be confirmed. We can stand for a lot, but not that.

1918.

The Supreme Court is all that stands between us and anarchy. A couple of years ago Congress passed a law prohibiting interstate transmission of goods made with child labor. Now the Court has thrown it out. Says it was a pack of nonsense, which it was.

1920.

The breakdown of the country is proceeding rapidly. They have just ratified the Woman Suffrage Amendment, giving women the vote in spite of the obvious fact that they know nothing about public affairs. Mark my words, they'll fall prey to any plausible demagogue who comes along, and will undoubtedly vote for a lot of soft-headed reform measures that will help to ruin the country. I certainly don't intend to let *my* wife go into a saloon or a pool-hall on election day in order to cast a ballot. I am glad my father didn't live to see this.

1922.

The Supreme Court is fighting nobly to stop all this socialistic nonsense. In 1919, Congress passed an outrageously high tax on factories employing child labor. The Court has just thrown it out, and a fine thing, too.

This fellow, Hoover, the Secretary of Commerce,

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has just come out with a crazy idea. He says when there is a depression, the government ought to spend a lot of money on building post offices and courthouses and all kinds of public works, and that this will bring back prosperity. Even a child ought to know that the government has nothing to do with prosperity, which results from a return of normal business volume. It is all a question of confidence.

1923.

The Supreme Court, thank Heaven, has thrown out the Massachusetts law of 1912 which set up a minimum wage for women and children. If people aren't willing to work for the best wages an employer can afford to pay, it serves them right not to work at all.

1925.

God bless the Supreme Court! Pennsylvania passed one of these fool laws a couple of years ago to pay old-age pensions to a lot of elderly bums and loafers. The Court has just ruled that they can't get away with that kind of Bolshevistic nonsense.

1930.

President Hoover has announced plans to increase the tariff all along the line. That certainly means that this depression will be over in a few months. Confidence will be restored, and confidence is all that is lacking.

1933.

This new President, Roosevelt, actually proposes to take money out of the federal Treasury and feed those who are out of work. I never heard of such crazy twaddle. Everybody knows that the workingmen who are any good have still got jobs, it's only the shirkers who have been fired. Anyhow, if we are going to do this kind of thing, the states and cities should be the ones to take care of it. They all have poor-farms of some kind, or municipal relief. Moreover, look at all the money those of us who have been a little fortunate are paying every year to the community chests.

This crazy man in the White House is doing something worse. He proposes a law now saying that if workers want to form a union, they've got to be allowed to, and the employer has got to deal with them, No business can survive such treatment. We'll all go bankrupt, that's clear.

1934.

These New Dealers are beginning to come out openly and advocate sheer communism. They propose to have the government force the states into a scheme for unemployment insurance and old-age pensions. The fabric of business just can't stand it, that's plain. Why should I be taxed to support a man for two or three months who is so lazy or incompetent that he won't go out and get himself a job? And as for these old-age pensions, they will destroy all incentive to save and our whole civilization will go smash.

One of the worst things they have proposed is to change the Federal Reserve System. The FRS is a wonderful thing, a steadying flywheel for the country's banking and business; but now they are planning to alter it so the government would have all kinds of power to control speculation and upset business in other ways. These changes would be absolutely fatal.

1937.

Roosevelt has come out with a scheme to destroy the whole government and set up a dictatorship like Hitler or Stalin. He wants to retire Supreme Court Justices at the age of seventy and if one of them refuses to quit, he would appoint extra men to the bench up to a total of six. Our form of government could never survive with a Supreme Court of fifteen. If this plan goes through, a lot of us are going to move to some other country, where a decent, respectable citizen still has a little freedom.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight

Reptilian green the aged throat,
Green as a bough of yew the beard;
He bent his head, and so I smote;
Then, for a thought, my vision cleared.

The head dropped clean; he rose and walked;
He fixed his fingers in the hair;
The head was unabashed and talked;
I understood what I must dare.

His flesh, cut down, arose and grew.
He bade me wait the season's round,
And then, when he had strength anew,
To meet him on his native ground.

The year declined; and in his keep
I passed in joy a thriving yule;
And, whether waking or in sleep,
I lived in riot like a fool.

He beat the woods to bring me meat.
His lady, like a forest vine,
Grew in my arms; the growth was sweet;
And yet what thoughtless force was mine!

Her beauty, lithe, unholy, pure,
Took shapes that I had never known;
And, had I once been insecure,
Had grafted laurel in my bone.

And then, since I had kept the trust,
Had loved the lady, yet was true,
The knight withheld his giant thrust
And let me go with what I knew.

I left the green bark and the shade,
Where growth was rapid, thick, and still;
I found a road that men had made
And rested on a drying hill.

YVOR WINTERS.

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Washington Notes

The Crisis in Democratic Party Control—CIO Tackles Mr. Weir—A Southern Paper Subsidy —Mr. Cooke and the Public Utilities

IT IS not easy to predict the outcome of the fight between Mr. Roosevelt and his Democratic enemies in the Senate. The senatorial death battalion, which has sworn by the beard of the Prophet to accept no compromises and take no prisoners, occupies a position of great strategic advantage. On the other hand, Mr. Roosevelt has never before had to call on his full strength and wiliness, and no one can say what he is capable of. It must also be said that there is still chance for a negotiated peace.

But if it is hard to tell what the end of the Supreme Court fight will be, there is no doubt about what is at stake. It is a fight for the control of the Democratic Party. A Supreme Court bill satisfactory to a majority of Congress could be written in a few hours. The Supreme Court, in itself, is no longer the issue. The issue is whether Senators Wheeler, Burke, Clark and the rest of the skull-and-crossbones squad are badder hombres than Mr. Roosevelt.

Since the beginning of the New Deal, Mr. Roosevelt has dictated to Congress. During sessions, it is true, he has consulted with Vice President Garner, Senators Robinson and Harrison and other official party leaders, but these conferences have been concerned almost entirely with day-by-day tactics, not with the New Deal's broad objectives. This neglect has nettled Senators with long terms of service; none, perhaps, so much as Mr. Wheeler. To their own vast surprise, these Senators now see a chance to humble Mr. Roosevelt, and the prospect has intoxicated them. At the moment, they are drunk with anticipated power.

As nearly as I can determine, the Senate recalcitrants appreciate fully that Mr. Roosevelt is no Harding or Coolidge, who can be ruled by a junta of party best minds. But they do insist that his position be no more than first among equals. He must consult them—not merely notify them—before he announces legislation, and especially before he makes major appointments. Whenever a substantial number of influential Senators oppose him, he must yield. These are the Senate recalcitrants' peace terms.

To anyone who believes in the New Deal's aims, Mr. Roosevelt's occasionally autocratic leadership of his party is justified. If he had acted only with the consent of the long-term Senate Democrats, many New Deal measures would never have been attempted. There is now reason to fear that if Mr. Roosevelt compromises in any substantial degree on the Supreme Court issue, this leadership of his will be lost. There must be a hundred New Dealers in the House, hitherto devotedly loyal to Mr. Roosevelt, who break out in gooseflesh each time the word "compromise" is mentioned. These are men who have publicly committed themselves in speeches and interviews to the full Supreme Court measure, to the addition of six new Justices. In their own minds, they have banked their future careers on Mr. Roosevelt's invincibility. If he is defeated—or if he gives the appearance of being defeated—by the Senate incorrigibles, they will be shaken to the core. It is doubtful if they can again be relied on during Mr. Roosevelt's term.

Organizers for the CIO are encountering a recrudescence of the company union in the peculiarly tricky form described in an editorial in last week's New Republic. Ostensibly the union receives neither financial support nor advice from employers, but two telltale characteristics always brand it as fraudulent. It has extremely low dues, often only ten cents a month, in contrast to the dollar-a-month dues fixed by some of the CIO unions, and its officers are invariably men unknown to the bona-fide labor movement. Recent examples of such unions have been the American Union of Steel Workers and the Independent Auto Employees' Association, both of which are now believed to be past their zenith. The CIO refers to such organizations as "yellow unions," the term used in England. It is reported that a yellow union is now being formed among the workers of the Humble Oil Company in Texas, and it is feared that the device may spread.

The CIO's forthcoming struggle with National Steel will be comparable only to that with Henry Ford in the automobile industry. National Steel's head, Mr. Ernest T. Weir, has all of Mr. Ford's patriarchal beliefs, and is an even more wicked fighter. It will be recalled that Mr. Weir plastered the old Wagner Labor Board with injunctions, successfully defying its authority. He was one of the inner group of Republicans who brought about the nomination of Governor Landon a year ago; as chairman of a manufacturers' committee, he circulated tons of anti-New Deal literature during the campaign. Weirton, West Virginia, the principal seat of National Steel's operation, was until recently a complete company town; CIO organizers venturing within its limits have been coolly arrested and beaten up. When the CIO takes Mr. Weir, it will have taken perhaps the toughest employer in America.

Approximately $90,000,000 in new capital, according to government estimates, will go into the Southern paper industry in the next few months. Some of it will be used for the production of newsprint by the processes developed by Dr. Charles H. Herty, which are expected to cut newsprint prices from $45 to $27 a ton. This influx of capital into the Deep South is being watched apprehensively by the administration. Its possibilities for social good or evil are enormous. Improper forestry practices on the part of the paper companies would mean, in a generation from now, greater devastation than was caused by the Civil War. Under existing law, little can be done except to warn and exhort the paper-company managements, and it is reported that certain of them have voluntarily given pledges of good behavior. To administration advisers, however, this Southern paper development sharply underscores the need for a Department of Conservation, and a national conservation program.

Mr. Morris Llewellyn Cooke and the REA have lately been under severe fire from liberal newspaper reporters. It is alleged that, under Mr. Cooke, money for rural power developments was ladled out lavishly to private-utility companies, including the Associated Gas and Electric system, and that farmers' coöperatives were consistently cold-shouldered. The attack seems somewhat belated, since Mr. Cooke has now resigned as head of the REA and has been succeeded by Mr. John M. Carmody. However, since the REA

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has been one of the most socially minded of the New Deal agencies, it is perhaps worth putting the record straight. Of approximately $40,000,000 spent by the REA under Mr. Cooke's authority, less than two and a half percent in dollar value, and five percent in number of allotments, went to private-utility companies. All the remainder went to farmers' coöperatives, municipalities, power districts and limited-dividend corporations.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Paradox in Pennsylvania—Bootlegging Was Never Like This—Human Rights v. Property Rights —Government Ownership Indicated

THE COMMISSION appointed by Governor Earle to study the bootleg-coal problem in Pennsylvania has just reported that the solution lies in the state's taking over some of the abandoned mines and operating them—enough mines to give work to at least 5,000 men. The suggestion is interesting. Maybe it is the beginning of a movement to nationalize these mines, without which, I believe, there is no way out. Perhaps never in history has there appeared so simple an illustration of the proposition that nothing is simple as the bootleg-coal episode in Pennsylvania.

All the propositions and principles and standards underlying this situation are as completely established as the laws of Moses or, for that matter, of gravity itself. The statute books of the nation and state are all plastered over with sacred laws about that most sacred of all rights—the right of property. The great, rich, powerful coal companies own these lands and have owned them for years. No one has disputed their title. The lands are taxed and, in some cases, heavily taxed, so that the taxes paid by the companies on these lands pay about 80 percent of the costs of the local governments. The coal companies have police. Besides, these lands are located in the imperial state of Pennsylvania, where the laws of property have functioned with the inevitableness of the solar system for generations.

Yet in these coal regions thousands of men have gone upon the lands of the coal companies. They do not go there at night with masks and behind dark bushes. They drive to work in their cars in the daytime, work their bootleg holes by the sides of the roads in full view of everyone, knock off in the afternoon and line the roads with their cars as they drive home. They take the coal of the companies. They admit it is stealing. A whole series of bootleg-coal shakers or breakers has been established for working this coal and these in some cases are run by men who have a capital invested in trucks and crude machinery.

What could be simpler than this situation? Here is trespass if ever there was. Here is wholesale invasion of the property of rich corporations in a conservative state. What to do about it? Why, simply have the police drive the men off the land. Those who refuse to leave, arrest them and punish them.

After all, these coal lands surround the old coal cities, where there are large numbers of business men. The Chambers of Commerce, the merchants will certainly put their support behind this assertion of law. But they won't. On the contrary they grumble at the companies, blame them for all the trouble and buy their coal from the bootleggers. Surely the churches can be counted on to denounce this wholesale violation of one of the modern church's most cherished commandments? But somehow they don't. In fact, some of the churches buy the cheap bootleg coal.

But what of the officers of the law? The police have to do something about it—law violations going on in full view, by the side of the road where the race of men go by. But the police don't do anything. In fact police, state police, constables ride by in their cars or on their motorcycles and give a hearty salute to the bootleggers as they pass. Prosecuting attorneys refuse to indict or prosecute and in a few cases where men have been sent to jail, the sheriff has received them cordially, given them a good meal and dismissed them at once through the back door.

But what do the companies owning the lands do about all this? Certainly they don't sit down and submit to it. Yes, that is precisely what they do. They complain, they petition the Governor, they issue publicity about it. But that's all.

Why? In Pennsylvania, the land of the freeholder and the home of the landlord, why? Because there are 13,000 men in those bootleg holes and 2,000 more working the breakers and 5,000 more on the trucks—as complete and effective an invasion as you will find anywhere. And it would take an army to drive them out and they would have to be shot down to do it, because they are pretty resolute about their invasion. But why not an army? After all what are our laws for and what is our militia for? Is it not to protect human rights, the greatest of human rights being the right of property? The militia could chase the men out. But the Governor won't order them out and, if he did, they would probably fraternize with the bootleggers.

The truth about the matter is that something has gone wrong, in this spot at least, with the law of property. There must be some law or principle mixed up in the situation somewhere, which we were not aware of in 1929, but which business men, ministers, newspapers, public officials, police, even the coal company itself, seem dimly to sense. There must be some human rights involved here and some social rights that, without the aid of courts or police, are somehow getting enforced. I do not pretend to be able to unravel them. But I do know that as long as coal is mined as it is in Pennsylvania, and coal lands are owned as they are, and mechanization throws many thousands of men out of work and threatens the very existence of the cities built beside these old mines, and as long as thousands of men have the alternative of starving or slaving in these bootleg holes for $2 and $3 a day, there is no solution of this strange problem by any of the old techniques.

This coal business is surrounded on all sides with apparrently insoluble difficulties. Men used to work for small pay. Now the pay is better. But the owners have mechanized the breakers and centralized operations, abandoning more than half the mines. Competition with cheaper, lighter, more popular fuels makes high wages just another hurdle for the industry. For the state to take some mines and operate them in competition with the existing mines is full of headaches for the state and private companies. Turn what way you will, you can see no light for the hard and soft coal mines but government ownership and operation.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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Censorshipping

IT IS as natural for the human mind to turn toward the idea of censorship as to that of kings; and it is equally natural that it should feel a motion of rebellion against either. It is true also that the argument for and against either of these ideas will vary with country and epoch, developing, cramping, inspiring, poisoning, fulfilling or depriving, as the case may be. And so you cannot say that a censorship of an art, the art of the theatre, for example, has always been an evil. From the standpoint of a certain democratic idealism, some sort of statement might be made in that direction; from the evidence of history much remains to be said otherwise.

Recently (Tuesday, May 11) there was a meeting at which every branch of the theatre was represented to protest against the Dunnigan Bill, and a telegram was sent to Governor Lehman, signed by representatives of the Drama Critics' Circle, the Actors' Equity Association, the American Theatre Council, the United Scenic Artists, and divers other organizations of musicians, dramatists, stage employees—plus the Authors' League, the Theatrical Transfer Association, Newspaper Guild, Civil Liberties Union and others. That same night the leading player in each theatrical company playing in New York read to the audience during the last intermission a statement that all the forces of the legitimate theatre had been organized to fight immediate censorship. It was, the reader said,

> a censorship which suddenly came upon us one day last week, when a measure called the Dunnigan Bill was railroaded through both houses of the State Legislature without the slightest warning or announcement to the public.
>
> But now this bill spells the doom of free thinking and free speech on the stage. In New York it gives the man who happens to be the Commissioner of Licenses—and who is a political appointee—the absolute power to censor any play in any theatre in whatever way he pleases. He is given absolute right to close any play for any reason that he sees fit, no matter how whimsical his notion may be, by revoking the license of the theatre in which the play is represented.

The bill had already passed both houses of the Legislature, so that the only and desperate chance of preventing its fruition lay in convincing the Governor of New York of its dangers. Protest cards were distributed to the audience.

Were it not for the fact that such a bill could have gone this far already, manifesting thus the possibility of its becoming a law in our New York theatre, a discussion like this I am embarked upon might seem merely repetitious, and not necessary for readers who are intelligent, and who see at once what the whole thing amounts to. On the very face of it such a law would be, in the midst of our system and the process of our institutions, absurd and evil. It leaves room for every kind of tampering, of biased appointments, ignorance, prejudice, falsity, favored interests and special causes. The racial element possible to such a situation is obvious; so is the religious, since the way is opened for the objections or pressures of any religion that, though not necessarily either better or worse than its opponents, is organized; and in our general system organization takes on a special quality. That legislators should pass such a bill is too like much of our democratic past to be surprising; among other explanations for their doing so, we may think of one that parallels the doctors in Molière, the first of whom says to the second "If you will agree to giving this patient an emetic I will agree to anything you please for the next"—in sum, swapping. To the simple person who thinks the whole matter of this censorship bill one of morality—which to this simple person means only sex—the proposal may seem most timely as well as noble. But this is not the case. We have already legal means by which sheer indecency can be handled. What the Dunnigan Bill proposes is a very different thing: wider, more mercurial, more confused and more, as Euripides said of the Dionysian, dependent on the nature of the being it acts through. The whole idea applied to the New York stage is preposterous.

Having said this much by way of scoring the situation, I may turn to what might conceivably at least be of more point to anybody interested in the real subject of censorship. We must not, at the start, say extreme or stupid things; for one of the first ways in which a narrow, tricky, intense or oblique matter wins its victory over us is by driving us into a heat or corner where we overstate. For instance—

Quite contrary to the idea that censoring must by its very essence prevent the spring of thought and vitality in the theatre, or that the drama's advance is thwarted by the bounds and limits put upon it from above by the State, we have a signal fact: great drama, so far as I know, has always been likely to appear in epochs that were highly censored. We cannot dwell on the point beyond the rather obvious histories. Certainly the Greek drama was subject to State rulings (some of Euripides' most effective spots were due to his struggling within civic-social-artistic limits imposed upon him—or see the stately wheeze from Goethe about how it is in struggling within limits that the master comes out.) Shakespeare and the Elizabethans had to look sharp and more than one of them knew what a prison was. Molière had to work five years for the presentation of his "Tartuffe," and got it solely through the King's intervention, and to the Churchmen's rage, who later, when the time came, almost refused him any funeral at all. The same care behooved Calderón and Lope de Vega.

Italian fascism, the theory of which differs from democracy through the difference in the individual's relation to the state and not simply through the mere business of a dictator (which is what easy thinkers believe), may, or may not, have led Pirandello toward greater or lesser playwriting. On the other hand we are told that the present Russian state under Stalin extends some special encouragement to dramatists; but look at the recent condemnation of Afinogeniev, so profoundly a devotee of the whole regime, or so one might have thought. The English system with regard to the theatre (not to say newspapers, political propaganda and what not) is full of those inconsistencies that we as Anglo-Saxon descendants understand, but the whole Continent is puzzled by. Since the time of Charles I, if I remember right, the whole business is beneath interest except for such Englishmen as prefer a living theatre—the Lord Chamberlain has had the right to decide what plays London shall produce. Not that he necessarily knows anything of art; the system involves the State rather. Years after its continental production, Ibsen's play of "The Doll's House" was permitted

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in London, and then under some title about breaking a butterfly, and in a version where in the end the wife comes back home. In these recent years the London censorship has forbidden the production of such plays as "Young Woodley" and "The Green Pastures." Among divers taboos, the devil, the Royal Family and God, for instance, cannot be mentioned to English audiences, theatre, movie or radio. This British censorship, so long as it is personal and hit-or-miss, we can endure more easily than the fact that a censorship in any given case should sound as if it belonged to anything consistent, foreseen, and managed to a given end.

All of which proves nothing about the English theatre, good or bad; it proves rather something about the English public. Nor have the historical citations proved anything except perhaps that happy is the artist who lives in an epoch, the will and authority of which are harmonious to him, and the life and spirit significant, and who has the genius to function both within them and completely.

As to censorship among us here in America, we have to begin with, very little concept of a state or of the individual under the state; a society with a point of view is not a familiar idea among us, and our general idea of government is still full of the frontier: something to be free of so far as circumstances allow. A censorship with us might by turns in chance, or by application steadily applied, have some consistent policy; but it would be the policy of a special group, not of the State, because with us the State has no policy save intermittently or slapdash. For the present at any rate we read (May 20) that Governor Lehman has vetoed the bill. Broadway may now enjoy a breathing spell during which to consider how much dency or indecency it will pursue, and also how much thinking. STARK YOUNG.

Montgomery in the Movies

THANKS to its original in Emlyn Williams' wild, subtle stage play, and in spite of the fact (seen in retrospect) that because of original restrictions a great deal of the motion still comes out in dialogue and from practically the same set, the picture "Night Must Fall" is one of the most vivid and powerful effects the films have managed. It has unity without any waste or flaws and a gathering momentum as exact, clear, fascinating as a ball of crystal on a black felt incline, under lights. (Hunt Stromberg produced; Richard Thorpe directed.)

The story is complex in conception only; in outline it is direct and simple. Its effects of horror and suspense come from no outer mechanisms of vampires, were wolves, etc. It develops wholly from within three people: the page boy, the girl, the old woman, in that order of importance. And its method is that of an intellectual scalpel, bright and delicate and laying back the tissues with almost unbearable steady precision—almost with the surgeon's healing function as well, because those who would appear in headlines simply as fiends or fools reveal themselves gradually here in impulses common to all humanity, but warped into the unspeakable by simple inner and outward pressures, as of some bedeviling bone against the brain or of some stored-up wrong, old envy, hatred, frustration. So they are to be understood and, even when most pitiless and terrible, pitied.

There is an old woman living off in the forest, demanding and venomous from behind her money and pretended invalidism; there is a niece in the house who is something of a sensitive nature and the butt of the old lady's spleen; and there comes to answer for the condition of one of the kitchen girls a lout of a page boy from the hotel in the village, carrying off a supreme insolence with blarney, and all women with his bold charm. Also there's been a foul murder near by in the forest but never mind that: the youth manages to take the old girl into camp straightway, and he comes into the house as her special servant. He is a slick one; he is so brash and male and infuriating to the niece in some wild way that she begins to, well in a way hate him of course but, well, when will he come out and cross the room again? Having some wild blood of her own and being about him the way she is getting to be, she sees more and guesses more than anyone and in that close house things get about as tense as ever will be seen, for she can neither stay nor leave, nor sleep from the rushing of her blood; she knows the young bucko is forever playing a part, hiding something, never to be touched in the world of his own ego. . . . There is no use going on to the end with the mounting story—the girl released, the boy trapped, the old lady paid off in the hard coin of her own mean foolishness.

It isn't a story that can be "told" anyway. The words are there but the truth behind them is only released through the contrast, comment and continuity of moments visualized in the camera—so that the awful hatbox may be openly referred to in three scenes and still dominate twenty, and the serene and private black Persian may cross the frame as silent as a symbol forever and yet be the final strand in the pattern as night falls, and things seen by the character may be denied the audience through the camera's focus, or the opposite of that; and a spoken line may take on some essential eerie quality by reason of the speaker's invisibility. And the acting in this picture is of the clearest water, with the depths of meaning visible and no alien sediment (as of personal pose or inflection) to refract the main light. Rosalind Russell is so much the creator of her part that the unspoken lines go beyond those written into the play, until a complex and ordinarily opaque character becomes as clear as air. Dame May Whitty lays down a groundwork for her last frenzy that raises into pure terror a scene that would have been the comic death of all the many who can do a good stock part labeled Crotchety Old Lady. And the maid servants had the touch of life (the two from the play) and the Scotland Yard man was quietly Scotland Yard, and I liked everybody and the way they were handled in the scenes where the English guide with an umbrella led the gawps to the scene of the crime.

In spite of all that went into it, the outstanding factor in this picture is the job of creation Robert Montgomery does in the main part. It is a role within a role actually, for he must be one thing to each of the characters and another thing to the all-seeing eyes in his audience; and it is dangerous not only because of the difficulties of moving convincingly along two different planes of technique (audiences must see him act for others without losing the illusion that for them he is not acting, he is real life), but because the part as written is so far beyond general experience that its improbabilities must be seated in some

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person whose movements we can follow with trust, yet whose first false move will tip the whole boat into ridicule. And Robert Montgomery does it, with his hint of brogue in the right spots of emphasis, his open swagger and terrible inner seclusion, the chuckles, the boyish honey, the horrors, hooded vengeance and all. And he plays it like a good pianist, whom you will see leaning back from his instrument at ease, negligent and almost contemptuous in his sure command, yet always with loving care and the gift of beauty on him.

Bob Montgomery, the playboy type. Wisecracks in penthouses. Quite good as such. Make a million for somebody all right, and if he doesn't like the type part, he knows what he can do with it. Well, it is also the fact that he is president of the Screen Actors' Guild, and there are rumors that when he asked for a chance at this different part his company saw the boomerang qualities and said, So let him have it, let him have it right in the neck—teach *him* to agitate around here. In any event, it seems Montgomery has temporarily hurt himself at the box office, and that there are some who do not find this unamusing.

But leaving these folk to their little laugh, it is an important thing that he has done in breaking through here, and I should be happy to have it stand as a signal to others in the industry, so that they would take heart a little, and get up on their hind legs a little, and not give up in the battle against the chumps. Good work has got to be done by individual directors, writers, actors, and specifically those who have already proved they can produce the goods, and I don't mean slightly hungry fellows hollering manifestoes down a rain barrel. And what they are up against is no such easy entity as the "crass stupidity of capitalist Hollywood"; they are up against the fat torpor of the companies *and* the reviewers, chatterboxes, intellectuals and our very good friend the public. When by breaking their stout backs to make a good film they turn out a superior job in spite of everything (see above), why you can paste it in your hat that something genuine has been added to the cultural history of this country—and crept up on most of us while we were dozing at that.

And the Actors' Guild (so long as it keeps out of the hands of little schemers) should be one of the best ways of getting such things done. It is a fine thing not only for cracking down on the sweating of extras and all the bitcheries of contract lawyers and racket magazines, but for making it easier and safer for good people to do good work —now while the iron is hot and the professor sleepeth—in an art we will all some day have to be proud of. For the most beautiful thing about the movies is that they are still so close to their public that good work is usually appreciated on the spot, which was as true of Mack Sennett and Thomas H. Ince and Chaplin and Disney before the Museum of Modern Art had ever thrown down on the Cinema with its earnest monocle as it was of Frank Capra when he released a little film called "It Happened One Night." "Night Must Fall" ran into cross-currents at the box office; but it shouldn't actually lose money and its effect shouldn't be lost. Although subject to correction as being far from the scene, let's say that I am near enough to it in hope and faith to lead a cheer for Mr. Robert Montgomery of the Screen Actors' Guild, and for what he stands for in the movies.

OTIS FERGUSON.

The Bandwagon

Neither Mr. Machin nor I are [sic] champions of war, and yet we can conceive no substitute which would be equally adequate for the real health of humanity and the building of stronger races.—*Sir Arthur Keith, quoted in The Tribune, London.*

Five men sentenced to three months in jail each must read a chapter of the Bible each day they are behind bars.

Police Recorder Vincent C. Duffy added this provision to their sentences today. "What this world needs today," he said, "is a little more faith of our fathers."—*Associated Press dispatch from Paterson, N. J., published in The Washington Post.*

The American standard of living is a very high standard and most wage earners are not able to approximate it in the course of their working life.—*From an article by Frances Perkins in Labor Information Bulletin, January, 1937.*

Is There a Rehoboam in the House?

May the dear Lord bless our Supreme Court as it is, and save us and our children from the terrible fate thrust upon a nation by Rehoboam and his inexperienced advisers.—*From a letter signed Ella Lindsey Burton in The Little Rock, Ark., Gazette.*

Keep-It-Clean Department

Prize pencilology by the Hays office . . . was the elimination of the words "love nest" in one of the unimportant stuffing items in a dummy newspaper used in a Paramount film.

Although it had nothing to do with the picture . . . it had to be changed to "penthouse."—*From a Hollywood dispatch in Variety.*

Aryan Beatitude No. I.

The discharge of the old contingent [from the German government labor battalion] was accompanied by a morning festival broadcast by all German radio stations, especially to the 1,300 labor-service camps. The festival was held under the motto, "Blessed be that which makes hard." This motto was repeated by the labor-service chorus, which chanted: "We thank the Führer for the hard life which he bestowed upon us in the labor service."—*From a Berlin dispatch to The New York Times.*

It Rained

The game at Madrid is nearly up. The international brigades and one or two of their hardened militia battalions can fight action after action, but, like Joe Johnston facing Sherman in Georgia, they must always retreat in the end, and the end must be surrender unless they can escape through the bottle neck and fall back on Valencia. Given good weather we should see the answer to this dilemma in April.—*Douglas Jerrold in an article published in The American Review.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Both Their Houses

SIR: I have just completed reading "The Case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Center," reviewed by Mr. Cowley [The New Republic, April 7]. In the light of the verbatim text, I find a flat contradiction in Mr. Cowley's argument which makes his conclusions about the Moscow trials both inconsistent and incredible. Speaking of the testimony of Radek and Pyatakov, Mr. Cowley writes: "On these points I think we might suspend our judgment until more conclusive evidence is produced by one side or another."

Let us now turn to page 543 of the verbatim report. Radek is speaking:

"What proofs are there in support of this fact? [Trotsky's guilt.] In support of this fact there is the evidence of two people—the testimony of myself who received the directives and the letters from Trotsky (which, unfortunately, I burned), and the testimony of Pyatakov, who spoke to Trotsky. *All the testimony of the other accused rests upon our testimony"* (my italics).

If Mr. Cowley believes that we must suspend judgment on Radek's and Pyatakov's testimony, then in view of this explicit declaration by Radek, how can he in all logic and conscience regard the case against Trotsky—or even against Trotsky's alleged Russian followers—as proved?

Mr. Cowley further commits an error of capital political importance when he writes: "It does not seem to me that Trotsky's moral guilt or innocence is really at stake. There is no doubt that he hates the Soviet government and wants to overthrow it. . . ."

Since when does it follow that because an individual desires to overthrow a government, he therefore is guilty of arson, sabotage, espionage in the service of the enemy, and assassination? It is these crimes of which Trotsky has been accused and not of being opposed to the Stalin regime. On Mr. Cowley's view, it would be quite justified for an American patriot to charge members of the Communist Party with all sorts of crimes from arson to assassination merely because they desire to overthrow the government. This is precisely what Red-baiters do here, and what Hitler does in Germany. The same answer that Mr. Cowley would make to such an absurd charge applies to his own statement. Guilt on all the matters charged is a matter of *evidence.*

Finally, the argument from possibility, besides being irrelevant, cuts both ways. Mr. Cowley asserts that it doesn't seem at all impossible for Trotsky and his alleged followers to have been guilty of the crimes charged. Quite so. Neither is it at all impossible that the trials, like the trials of the Mensheviks in 1931, were frame-ups. The question is one of evidence. And my own considered judgment, on the basis of the published records, is that no evidence was introduced to substantiate the confessions of the defendants that they were guilty or to refute the testimony of Trotsky that he was not guilty.

New York University. SIDNEY HOOK.

SIR: Mr. Cowley, while professing friendship for the Soviet Union, draws some conclusions that are absolutely contradictory to the findings of the trial.

After asserting that "the behavior of the prisoners on the witness stand was certainly that of guilty men lacking popular support, and ashamed of the deeds that brought them here," he propounds the question: "Did Trotsky really plot with the Germans and the Japanese to restore capitalism in Russia in exchange for their promising to reëstablish him into power?" And despite the testimonies of Radek, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov and Serebriakov to that effect, he reaches the conclusion that in view of the violent denial of these testimonies by Trotsky, "we must suspend judgment until better information is furnished."

But then how did Trotsky expect to come to power?

If "for the phantom of power Trotsky is ready to sacrifice the last man capable of dying for him," as Radek affirmed, and if the prisoners on the witness stand lacked popular support, as Mr. Cowley said at the beginning of his article, then, naturally, it follows from this that the only way for Trotsky to come to power was through foreign intervention—an alliance with all the reactionary forces in and out of the Soviet land. This is precisely what the trial has established. All the sabotage, subversion, terror and destruction of Soviet property was part and parcel of a dastardly plan to shake the Soviet power and then overthrow its government with the help of foreign armies.

Yet these activities of Trotsky are not grave enough to incriminate him in the eyes of Mr. Cowley. "He could not be guilty of treason to Russia," says the writer, "for the simple reason that Trotsky regards himself as a citizen of the World Revolution."

But was the World Revolution of Trotsky really possible? . . . Where would the Soviet Union have been today had the Russian masses followed the adventurous Trotsky? The Soviet Union did not betray the World Revolution, as Mr. Cowley means to say, on the contrary, it saved it from stagnation by industrializing and stabilizing the country. Millions of people all over the world are gazing today upon the Soviet achievements in gasping amazement. Is not this an immense impulse to the spirit of revolt against capitalism? . . .

Akron, Ohio. GEORGE A. STOYCHOFF.

[We propose to print no more statements of opinion on the Moscow trials unless they are supported by new information.—THE EDITORS.]

"Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight"

[When we accepted Yvor Winters' poem, "Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight," printed on page 98 of this issue, we wrote him a letter saying that although we liked it very much we didn't know exactly what it meant, though it was obviously a treatment of the Gawayne legend in terms of a vegetation myth, and saying moreover that every time we printed an incomprehensible poem a dozen readers wrote angry or puzzled letters. "Couldn't you send a note of explanation," we said, "so that the editors will have a line of defense prepared when the letters begin to come in?"—THE EDITORS.]

SIR: Your letter leaves me mildly discouraged. Most of my poems are allegories, and I should guess from your sudden start at "Sir Gawayne" that you had not guessed the fact. And "Sir Gawayne" struck me as an unusually lucid one, though it is not as good a poem as a couple you have recently turned down.

The legend is treated not in terms of *a* vegetation myth, but in terms of vegetation myth. I have done no reading in Arthurian scholarship in some years; I have done a good deal in times past, but it has never been a focus of my interest. The fact of the matter is, if you must have it, that I was recently reading to my five-year-old daughter a version of the Green Knight story which occurs in the Everyman volume of fairy tales by Ernest Rhys. Thinking it over, and thinking over the similar tales in the Cuchulain cycle, I observed the elements that would lead one to identify the knight as some kind of vegetation demon: the greenness, his indestructibility, the remote and wild region in which he lived, etc. Taking him thus, for the sake of the experiment, I proceeded to see what I could extract from him poetically; I took it for granted, incidentally, that a good deal more occurred in the castle than Gawayne later reported explicitly. Thus we get a vegetation demon, a demon of growth (physical growth), sense, nature in all its non-human significations, tempting and trying a human, the human surviving more through habitual balance than through perfect control at the height of the temptation, but gradually recovering himself. If you like, at a more general level, it is the relationship of the artist toward sensibility: Crane was a Gawayne who succumbed. This theme, if reduced to its most general terms, is the theme of most of my best poems for the past seven or eight years, and the explanation of it is easily to be found in my criticism. It is, of course, unreasonable

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to hope that anyone will have read either my poems or my criticism.

At any rate, I am grateful for your curiosity, and hope that your prediction regarding the curiosity of your readers will prove to be well founded.

Los Altos, Calif. YVOR WINTERS.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Mrs. Letitia D. Miller, of Sewanee, Tennessee, who is a native of Mississippi, says she speaks from a profound knowledge of local politics in saying that the way to end lynching in the South is automatically to remove the sheriff of any county in which a lynching occurs and forever bar him from public office. In the South, it seems, local political machines revolve about the office of sheriff, the richest plum in the county and one that often can be worked for more money than the Governor of the state receives. She says the sheriff "would risk life and limb in defense of his income even though he does not think a poor Negro worth defending."

C. T. Nowacki, of Los Angeles, California, can't understand why the reading of the record of the Soviet trials isn't sufficient to prove to anyone the guilt of the defendants; while Melville Kress, of Pittsburgh, thinks too much theorizing and too many side issues have obscured the central question: is or is not Trotsky guilty? . . . A. and C. L. Harriss, of Chicago, applaud the burlesque, "Time Marches Off," in the issue of May 19 and find it timely and New Republishable. . . . R. C. O'Brien, of New York City, is another who liked this piece. Mr. O'Brien says a great journalistic lack in America is intelligent criticism of the radio. Drama, which reaches directly only a relatively few people, is sedulously covered by a wide variety of publications, while radio, which reaches almost the entire population, is ignored.

Officers of the American Library Association tell us they are making great plans for their fifty-ninth annual conference to be held in New York City, June 21 to 26. Carl Van Doren, Olin Downes, Charles Ferguson and Alvin Johnson are among the speakers scheduled to appear.

The North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, whose headquarters are at 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City, sends us an announcement that it has received official authorization under the Neutrality Act to solicit funds for relief activities in Spain. The Committee is publishing an exceptionally vivid pamphlet, "The Crime of Guernica," giving eyewitness accounts of what happened during the bombing of the unfortified town and reprinting the protest signed by influential Americans of all shades of political opinion. . . . The United Youth Committee, which maintains the same headquarters as the North American Committee, is making special efforts to collect relief funds for children who have been compelled to flee from the war zone.

What's on the Air?

Carl Carmer, author of "Stars Fell on Alabama" and "Listen for a Lonesome Drum," begins a new series of programs dealing with regional American folklore. Monday, May 31, 10:30 to 11 P.M., CBS.

Governor Earle of Pennsylvania is chief speaker on the program of the Southern Society. Wednesday, June 2, 10:45 to 11:15 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Henry Pratt Fairchild, Margaret Culkin Banning, Betty Gram Swing, Janet Fowler Nelson and others participate in a symposium on the subject of "Working Wives." Friday, June 4, 2 to 2:30 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

Current status of the temperance and prohibition movements in America and throughout the world reviewed by Mrs. Ida B. Wise, vice-president of the WCTU. Friday, June 4, 3:30 to 4 P.M., CBS.

The week's musical programs include Bidu Sayao, soprano, as soloist with a symphony orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy, Sunday, May 30, 9 to 10 P.M., CBS; the third act of Mozart's "Figaro" broadcast by the Glyndebourne Opera Festival from London, Thursday, June 3, 3 to 3:45 P.M., NBC-Blue Network; and E. Robert Schmidtz, pianist, giving a lecture recital dealing with Russian music, Saturday, June 5, 6 to 6:30 P.M., CBS.

All times given are Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

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Perspectives

Progress and Catastrophe, by Stanley Casson. New York: Harper and Brothers. 275 pages. $2.75.

OFTEN a traveler returning from a long voyage is a foreign observer among his own neighbors; by comparing their folkways with those of Morocco or Mindanao, he discovers patterns of living to which he had once been blind. Professor Stanley Casson of Oxford is like a man coming back to modern Europe after a still longer voyage into the past. For twenty-five years he has been an archeologist specializing in the history and prehistory of the eastern Mediterranean. Used to digging in the ruins of dead cities, he now feels that London and Paris are likely to end like Hattosas and Mycenæ and Palmyra.

During prehistoric times, human progress was sometimes halted for thousands of years. Later, in the period covered by Professor Casson's studies, there were two great disasters, each of which was followed by centuries of darkness and retrogression. The first was the destruction of that great Minoan civilization which possibly had reached a higher stage than either Babylonia or Egypt. Declining after 1300 B.C., probably as a result of wars with the Mycenæans, it was utterly destroyed by the Greek barbarians about 1150. It was at least five centuries before the Mediterranean world climbed back to the same level of culture. The second great disaster was of course the fall of Rome. I used to doubt that anything new could be written on this subject of freshman essays and examination papers, but Professor Casson approaches it from two angles that will be new to the general reader. He describes the coarsening of daily life in Roman Britain as revealed by the excavation of ruined villas; and he describes the barbarian conquest of Gaul as revealed in the letters of Sidonius, a Roman country gentleman. Both these sources give him material that bears on the present day.

He believes that modern civilization is just as definitely threatened as was Roman Gaul in the fifth century. But nobody except the misguided cranks can believe in a Red Terror, a Yellow Peril or a Black Menace. "There are no hungry waiting hordes on our doorstep. The barbarism is here and now, with us, inside the gates all the time." Many of its symptoms are the same as those that preceded the fall of Rome—intolerance, hysteria, disorder, the loss of personal freedom and security. Still worse is fascism, which is violent retrogression erected into a system of government. As he considers this evidence, the student of the past is driven to an extreme conclusion about the present:

> To me it seems that civilization is not on the brink of collapse, but that it has already some years ago collapsed, much as it might be said that the Roman world had collapsed after 400, even if it did not vanish for another century. . . . I wonder exactly how long it will take us to awake to the fact that before our very eyes the world we lived in in our youth has passed away.

It is not hard to criticize Professor Casson's conclusions. In so far as the task he set himself was "to search through the records of civilization for those elements which lead to what is usually called Progress, and also for those elements which lead to the opposite movement, Retrogression," his essay is a failure. He does not search at all; he stands at a distance and observes the panorama; without coming much closer he could not distinguish the conflicting forces that move in either direction. His suggested remedy for chaos—that the remaining civilized nations might remain within their own walls like a new Byzantium—is possibly worse than the disease. But the book has virtues that are not connected with its thesis; it is written with warm enthusiasm and hot anger against stupidity; it abounds in opinions and observations that are unscientific but full of good sense. Best of all, it approaches our world from an unfamiliar angle. I recommend it as an exercise in changing one's perspectives.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Proletarian Mathematics

Mathematics for the Million, by Lancelot Hogben. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 647 pages. $3.75.

Men of Mathematics, by E. T. Bell. New York: Simon and Schuster. 613 pages. $5.

IN ITS long history, mathematics has acquired a variety of reputations. It has been extolled as the most direct ladder to the Godhead, as the structure of Ultimate Reality, as the infallible logical method that can free men from ignorance and superstition; and it has been damned as a black art and the instrument of the Devil, as a corrupter of men's finer and more adequate insights, as an idle game with static forms incapable of expressing the movement of nature. On the other hand, it is a commonplace that many of the engineering feats of our society depend upon an intensive cultivation of mathematics; and no one will deny that little of modern physical science is intelligible without some knowledge of the mathematical techniques it employs. There seem, therefore, to be good reasons for rejecting the exaggerated claims that its theological-minded devotees and contemners have made for it; and empirical naturalists must applaud every competent revaluation of mathematics as a remarkable though limited tool, forged specifically for the sake of understanding and controlling the material world we inhabit.

Professor Hogben's book is a contribution to such a revaluation. But it is more than that. To the majority of men mathematics is one of the most esoteric of the theoretical disciplines. However, a state of affairs in which the plain man bows down in idolatrous worship of the technician is not a healthy one, and complete ignorance of mathematics places him at the mercy of every nonsense dressed up in mathematical terminology. A clear head and a sense of humor often serve as adequate safeguards against the absurdities of pretentious experts wandering from their fields of proved competence; but these, unfortunately, cannot be taught. It is therefore a socially important task to make available popular accounts of specialized methods as well as their achievements. And it is this which Mr. Hogben attempts for mathematics. A royal road to mathematical knowledge cannot be built; but the way can be made smoother and the scenery more attractive.

There are several ways of sugaring a pill, and Mr. Hogben adopts the device of emphasizing the practical character of mathematics. But in addition to developing an array of useful formulas, with their applications, he aims to show that mathematics has been most progressive when it has responded to the pressure of social needs, and most stagnant when its professors have succumbed to the ideology of the status quo. The outcome is a picture of the history of mathematics as an endless battle between the forces of Ormuzd (downtrodden humanity and mathematicians with an eye to the practical worth of their studies) and Ahriman (priests, philosophers and pure mathematicians). And in the excitement of vicariously participating in the battle, Mr. Hogben wellnigh forgets his medicinal ingredients, so that the pill is almost all sugar.

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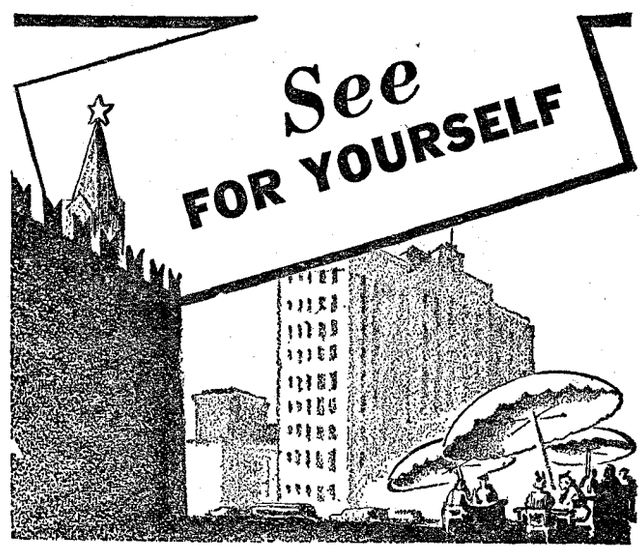
Mr. Hogben regards mathematics as the language of size. This is a very suggestive approach, and helps make clear that whatever else mathematics may be it is at least a series of operations upon symbols that have some relevance to the world about us. His exposition of technical matters is clear, though perhaps not unusually so, and the historical settings he supplies for the occasions of mathematical research and its application make his book highly readable and entertaining. Nevertheless, one must seriously ask whether his emphasis upon mathematics as a growing storehouse of formulas to expedite measurement and calculation succeeds in giving his untrained readers a good idea of what mathematics is about. The operations of mathematics are symbolic and therefore formal and general. The task of the discipline is to show what are the logical consequences of our assumptions, and proof is of its essence. However, this important matter is nowhere stressed, and indeed Mr. Hogben seems to have little respect for proof.

Mr. Hogben's peculiar brand of historical materialism helps to vitiate his presentation of many vital topics. Contributions of first-rate magnitude to our understanding of the power and limitations of numbers, if they do not happen to fit in with his standards of practical worth, are dismissed in so many words as utterly useless if not dangerous to the social good. He has only a sneer for the acute device invented by Eudoxus for handling the irrational numbers, and judges it to be really a hindrance to mathematical progress and simply a reflection of the undesirable traits of Greek society. Is he dealing squarely with his reader when he asserts dogmatically that the famous puzzles of antiquity concerning motion could not have been solved so long as Greek mathematicians neglected "time"—a neglect which, according to him, was made good by the commercially minded "Reformation mathematics"? Did Aristotle never write on this matter? And shall one simply be amused by the following comments upon the Pythagorean proof that the square-root of two is not a rational fraction?

> The disciples of Plato, who enjoyed an independent income and held up to ridicule teachers who had to earn a livelihood by instruction, set great store by this ingenious argument. It will not worry us as much as it impressed them, nor force us, like Plato, to regard geometry as a useless and therefore exalted ornament of leisure. Being good citizens, we are interested in the profitable sort of brainwork which tells you how to do something in contradistinction to the ornamental culture which concerns itself with showing what it is impossible to do.

One hears the voice even if one does not yet see the shape of a *Kulturgleichschalter*. No doubt one way to write history or govern a society is to find a whipping-boy upon whom one can infallibly fix responsibility for the stupidities and shortcomings of mankind. Mr. Hogben has found his and has written accordingly. But one must hope that he will be less ready with the whip when he helps run the society he has so much at heart.

Professor Bell's book is of a different order. His publishers classify it with Will Durant's "Story of Philosophy," but in this they do less than justice to him. For while Mr. Bell's book, like Durant's popular classic, is written as a Lives of the Heroes and is a convenient compendium of the best anecdotes about each, it contains not only interesting but also competent information about their several achievements. The book is very readable, although it is by no means obvious how much of its non-anecdotal parts will be intelligible to those unfamiliar with some advanced mathematics. Mr. Bell's own specialty is the theory of numbers,



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and his selection of material clearly reflects his personal loves. He also finds occasion to comment upon recent controversies on the foundations of mathematics. What he has to say in this connection will, I think, puzzle the initiated and mislead the novice. Surely higher analysis, *i.e.*, the mathematics of the continuum, is not in such danger of collapse as Professor Bell sometimes makes out.

ERNEST NAGEL.

To the Life

One Mighty Torrent: The Drama of Biography, by Edgar Johnson. New York: Stackpole Sons. 595 pages. $3.50.

THE TORRENT of Mr. Johnson's title is that of English biography, and its might is that of life liberated. From Wolsey to Lincoln Steffens, Sir Thomas More to Henry Adams, Sir Walter Raleigh to D. H. Lawrence, we have—such is the packing up to gusto of five centuries—a sense of almost continuous élan, of forward stress, felt in a kind of centripetal perspective. I mean that with a willing imagination everything rushes to a center; the center is now, the fictive, mirrored, instantaneous now, which we verge on in every objective mood, every represented crisis, and never reach in dilatory act. Hence the timeliness of the book; it presses as its one concern, and with examples in quick variety, upon the expression of human life in crisis.

The method is composite, like its subject. Mr. Johnson deals with the art of biography as well as with the lives lived and written. Biography varies between history and fiction as the lives vary between public affairs and the intermittences of the heart. If the unity of life is, as Mr. Johnson insists, in multiplicity, the unity of his book, if it has one, is in its duplicity: in the nonce seeming of unity which he can make his variety convey. The great aid to that seeming is the helter-skelter of history itself. If so much comes altogether, and in so long a line, a great parading mob, then the witnessing mind cannot help seeing connections, in the connections unity, and in the unity, even, purpose.

The purpose Mr. Johnson's method is designed to show is easy enough to recognize—it is in his subtitle: the drama of biography—but it is not easy and perhaps injurious to formulate. It is the purpose in the struggle, however mistaken in the event, however marred by blindness or weakness or pride, to express or enact aspiration, the struggle to live intelligently in the world that confronts us. It is in this sense that great men—or any men greatly seen—are representative of their times. Brought to crisis, their lives show what turn the struggle then took, and how. Seen altogether, as a torrent, the struggle is our own.

The tools Mr. Johnson uses are analysis and comparison, characterizing phrase, and, above all, broad quotation. All these tools are used in the pair with which he begins his book: Cavendish on Wolsey and Strachey on Manning. Cavendish had a sense of tragedy in human purpose; Strachey had a spiteful sense of the smallness of human beings. Wolsey, then, was driven by *hubris* through all the van of worldly glory to a tragic end; Manning was torn down within to an uncommonly inglorious level of trickery and meanness. Here in the lives of two Cardinals, and in the approaches of two biographers, the extreme problems of biography are exposed. Similarly, in the autobiographies of Ruskin and Mill, we see the tragedy of Victorian thinness, posed emotionally for Ruskin and intellectually for Mill. Again we are shown Shelley as the aspiring heart and Keats as the understanding spirit; Evelyn as the English gentleman, Pepys as the man intimately and broadly alive. And so on. The qualities Mr. Johnson brings to the use of his tools are wide sympathy, a sense of the entertaining, a knack for marking identities and distinctions, a feeling for the noble, and enough genuine prejudice to keep him going. His style is hasty, a little dangling, but always quick with interest, more suited to rough justice than to justness of expression. His strength is in the monument of existing biography he has digested; and the corresponding weakness is perhaps a virtue—the book being necessarily a summary of samples, the reader may well be driven into the realm of biography himself.

The book is abominably proofread; and the author himself is occasionally guilty of a slip. We find the artist who has lost his role in society becoming "at best an antinomian"—specifically Norman Douglas. I hardly suspect that Mr. Johnson intended Mr. Douglas to share a direct and enthusiastic apprehension of God's will with Anne Hutchinson.

R. P. BLACKMUR.

The Smell Is of Death

Twilight of a World, by Franz Werfel. New York: The Viking Press. $3.

FOR THIS volume, which is a collection of all his stories, Mr. Werfel has written an introduction. Mr. Werfel is a product of the old Austro-Hungarian empire; he matured during its last dying years, the stories are about those years; and in retrospect he regards them nostalgically. Ach, Vienna! But he does more: he writes an apology for Franz Josef's old empire, and even more than an apology, he writes a hymn in its praise. Mr. Werfel says:

> I am creating no theory, merely stating a fact of experience. *Empires have been, and will be founded only in the sign of a higher idea.* Nations can found only states . . . national states are dæmonic entities . . . fetish-worshipping, irritably "dynamic," menacing and menaced. But true empires arise only when a supernatural, divine element is mingled with the dæmonic. . . . For every true empire is an unrealized effort to establish the kingdom of God upon earth. At least, in the hour of its birth it was that.

Mr. Werfel develops this idea; he is a Kaiser-lover; he considers him a symbol, not a fetish. He looks upon the death of Franz Josef as the death of something more than human, as the death of an idea, of a desirable idea. The twenty-four countries, the thirteen peoples, held by the Hapsburg Caesar, Mr. Werfel says, "lived their common life and found their earthly happiness, serving the while the higher idea."

Eight stories follow. Some are long, of almost novel length, some are long short stories. From the first story, "Not the Murderer," written by the adolescent Werfel, to the later ones, such as "Class Reunion," the author gains in skill, though it cannot be said that he gains in insight. Here is writing well made, well tailored, but not created, not spontaneous, inspired. The whole is never greater than the sum of its parts.

When he down to write his introduction, Mr. Werfel could not have been reading his stories. Because the world they describe, the shining empire of Mr. Werfel's remarks, is a miserable world, in which not the Kaiser sits on the throne, but envy and frustration reign side by side and hold all in their power. The color is gray, the sound is of creak-

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ing, the smell is of death. Take "Class Reunion." A group of *Gymnasium* graduates meet again twenty-five years later, and examine each other. What is the moral of the story? That the successful failed most. That the best is the worst. Take the idyllic story, "The Staircase." A girl walks up a long stairway. That morning she found out she wasn't pregnant after all. The shadow has lifted. She can meet her parents. She can meet the man she is to marry. She says: "I am happy." She gets to the top of the stairs. She throws herself off. Take the story of the man who forged pictures. Was he happy? Was that crystallization, Franz Josef himself, was he happy—with his family bleeding for years, getting shot, getting murdered? Who then was happy in that grab-bag, unnatural, now forgotten world?

When Mr. Werfel generalizes about the past, why doesn't he read his own stories instead of trusting a memory that has transformed stark facts into pink fancies, that has softened, transformed, turned truth into mush, and produced a theory that you would not think the most reactionary monarchist would dare hold?

NATHAN ASCH.

The Flame

"Dear Theo": The Autobiography of Vincent van Gogh, edited by Irving Stone. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 584 pages. $3.75.

THE BOOK in hand has been made by dovetailing together parts of the three volumes of van Gogh's letters to his "Dear Theo," and for those who know something of these, the word "autobiography" in the subtitle will be clear. The eighteen years of correspondence with his brother (interrupted only by the two years when they were together in Paris) do add up to an autobiography of the artist, during the part of his life when he was preparing for his work, and doing it. In the narrower sense, of course, he had no thought of writing such an account of his life as the subtitle of this book denotes: he was simply telling what went on around him and within him. But he does so with such poignant, almost unexampled fullness and intensity that few lives are bared for us as completely, as thrillingly, as that of this man who, in his painting, has given us a work at once personal and beyond the scope of the personal; for his rare but great joys, and his sorrows—due to spiritual far more than to material causes—are the best joys and sorrows of all men.

Mr. Stone's brief preface is correct in its idea that the innumerable people who have been stirred by van Gogh's pictures will find new inspiration in these pages. And the editing of the original volumes, which reduces them by about two-thirds of their length, does more than is claimed. One is not merely relieved of a mass of irrelevant and repetitious material (and of five-sixths of the price of the complete record); the selection of the most important passages in the letters and, above all, the placing of them together in narrative form, render visible the true character of the life reënacted for us here. It is as if dead ashes were brushed away from the live coals around which they had collected: at once the heat and light of the fire become apparent, and the mighty breath of van Gogh's genius, released once more, blows through the whole and makes it mount up in his symbol, as I have long thought of it: flame. It twists his lines as he draws the cypress trees of Provence, it burns in the wheat-field of his last residence at Auvers, while the dark blue of the July heaven becomes flying smoke, and the flying crows cut their sharp note in the picture, like flecks of the black ashes to which Tragedy itself thought it had reduced this rebel against fate—only to see his art rise triumphant above the personal débâcle.

The devoted brother had for a long time believed in such an event, or at least it is one that he would have considered fitting for the painter's art, as did his widow when, dear Theo having so soon followed Vincent to the grave, she took on her young back the seemingly hopeless burden of the pictures—and lived to witness their rise to worldwide recognition. It was she also who, long before the days of success, kept up the dogged struggle to have the letters published, and so it is right for them to appear as a memorial to the man she loved, as much as to the brother-in-law whose last months of life were brightened by her acquaintance.

I have said that van Gogh's art transcends in value the personal element. If the foregoing lines (as perhaps the majority of selections from the letters themselves) stress phases of human emotion, the book still has enough passages of an intellectual character, enough of penetrating analysis of the means of the artist, to show how van Gogh, through his color, above all—though not alone in that aspect of his work—is one of those who meet Aristotle's demand that art go beyond the particular to the universal.

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To recall the calm of a Greek philosopher may seem the condemnation of the tortured man of our time. But listen again to the accent of an earlier Greek as he intones, in the "Prometheus," the rage of the fire-bringer of antiquity, and then see whether the modern artist, like the ancient one, has not drawn a great harmony from the "present pain" that he so proudly accepts in preference to the "servility" of those who would buy him off from his place on the crags.

WALTER PACH.

Washington Strip-Tease

Washington Calling, by Marquis W. Childs. New York: William Morrow and Company. $2.50.

MR. CHILDS has written a photographic description of the more luxurious reaches of New Deal Washington. All our familiar friends are here: the lobbyist-hero who knows to a penny the incomes and financial difficulties of government officials; the motherly salon-keeper who throws big parties where the lobbyist does his work of corruption; the perpetually frizzled Congressman who wants to be a federal judge; the two railroad owners who have to have a federal judge appointed in a hurry; the U.S. Senator who is out to get his with both hands; the city boss back home who votes the factory workers and buys diamonds for his wife. In a malicious, witty chapter, Mr. Roosevelt, barely disguised as President John Winthrop, delivers an apology for the New Age (Deal) to his chief brain-truster. Everyone has his price; if a man cannot be taken by money, he can be had by flattery and craft.

On the flyleaf of Mr. Childs's book is printed: *"Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose,"* a wholly tenable observation. Along toward the middle of his novel, however, Mr. Childs seems to run out on his own thesis. Against the welter of Washington's self-seeking, he erects the figure of an aged statesman, like "a curious and all but extinct sea creature cast up into the hard, naked light of day, on an alien shore," whom our lobbyist finds incorruptible. Astonishingly enough, we learn that the aged statesman's integrity comes (a) from the fact he was born before the age of industrialism, and (b) from the fact that his family originated in Virginia and that "gentlemen, of whom Deltus Mayne [the elderly statesman] was one, had been produced out of the transplanted Virginia stock."

This seems a strange moral to Mr. Childs's story. What is interesting about Washington now is that a conscious and intelligent effort is under way to make democracy function. It may fail. It may fail because, as Mr. Childs first suggests, human beings are eternally a mad, grafting, unruly lot, although other people might say that the present character of our economic system has something to do with it. But the New Deal is not going to fail because we have an insufficient number of Virginia gentlemen and Southern agrarians in Congress; we have about all the Virginia gentlemen and Southern agrarians in Congress right now that we can bear.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

New Republic readers are cordially invited
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Russia: State and People

The Soviets, by Albert Rhys Williams. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 567 pages. $3.

IN MY wanderings through villages in the Volga region often enough someone would say to me, "Do you know Mr. Williams, the big, very big, American?" For in villages in which Williams has lived—he does not merely visit a village, he lives there and all but becomes peasantized—he has become a memory, almost a legend. The reason is obvious to anyone who knows him. His candor, curiosity, good humor, above all his readiness and capacity to identify himself with a given situation or a given character, whether it is a muzhik without a cow or a kulak with five cows, have made him, as the Russians say, a *svoy chelovek,* a man after their own heart.

These qualities of the man permeate every page of his book. It just is not in Williams' nature to hate or sneer at anybody or anything. In addition he is sensitive not only to the meaning but to the sound and beauty of words. The result is a book as rich in charm as it is in information. One can open it at random on any page, begin with any paragraph, any sentence, and become engrossed in the reading.

No other book I know of in English or any other language, including the Russian, covers so vast a range of subjects as does "The Soviets." Races, nationalities, folklore, flora, fauna, rivers, minerals, forests, party organization, party doctrine, leaders, trade unions, farms, factories, foods, art, handicrafts—hardly a subject or item of importance escapes the author's attention. In terms of facts alone it is the most comprehensive book not only on the Revolution but on Russia and the Russians that I have ever read. Nor does Williams merely catalogue facts. Without sacrificing accuracy or reality he transmutes them into story, drama, often enough into lyrics. Whether he speaks of trees in the Russian forests or of treasured manuscripts in Russian museums and libraries or of Lenin advising him how best to learn the Russian language, he seldom fails to catch the substance as well as the poetry of his subject.

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Consider the following passage:

> The outer bark of the birch he [the peasant] turned into buckets, baskets and boxes. He wove bast shoes from the inner bark of the linden. He bent a sapling oak into a sleigh runner, a supple maple into an arching yoke to go over his horse's neck. In the same way he got his rake and plow and harrow—picking them out of the forest as an American would from a store.

In few words the reader gets a memorable picture of the recent past of the Russian village with all its backwardness in technical equipment and all its primitiveness in method of work and in mode of living.

Williams makes no secret of his appreciation of the constructive purposes and achievements of the Revolution. He is infinitely more impressed by its powers to create and transform than by its powers to mutilate and destroy. Yet he does not shut his eyes to stupidities and injustices, nor does he condone them. "Gruesome tales," he writes, "have been told of conditions [in labor camps] by released or escaped inmates . . . cruelties inflicted by guards so brutal and sadistic that they were shot." In his bibliography he includes the writings of the severest critics of the Revolution, of William Henry Chamberlin, Chernov, the Tcherniavins, André Gide and even of the Cossack general Krasnov.

Now and then the author accepts perhaps too readily the conclusions of Russian leaders and scientists. It still is a question, for example, whether Russia "stands first in the world in iron." Professor Gubkin's belief that the Kursk Magnetic Anomaly doubles the world's supply of iron still awaits the confirmation of the engineer and the miner. Nor is this writer so sanguine as Williams about the recession of intolerance in the realm of art and letters. This is true only of the work of men who are no longer alive. Indeed, Russia does more than any other country to keep alive and popularize the great literature of the past, her own and that of the outside world, all the way from Homer and Horace to Dickens and Mark Twain. Goethe and Schiller are infinitely greater heroes to the Russians than to the German youth. Yet the public dishonoring and subsequent recantations and atonements of eminent writers, artists, scholars in recent months, are reminiscent of the ugly spirit of RAPP, the one-time angry watchdog of Russian literature. Russia needs the restraining hand of a Gorky as much now as she ever did in those fierce days.

However, these rare lapses only enhance the value of a book of such enormous range as "The Soviets." There is no other book like it on the subject. It is more than a tribute to the author's brilliance and scholarship.

MAURICE HINDUS.

Books in Brief

Reperusals and Re-collections, by Logan Pearsall Smith. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 378 pages. $3.50.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH has been, in our time, perhaps the most persistent, and certainly one of the most distinguished of literary voluptuaries. This collection of essays, which dates from 1898 to 1936, fully asserts his integrity in the kind of living and loving he has so ardently and unchangingly practised. Mr. Smith's curiosity is curiously confined, his intelligence singularly limited, but his style is good. The one thing which he most promptly finds in those whom he loves, which he best explains, and himself most successfully emulates, is good writing. To other things which even those who wrote well must have considered

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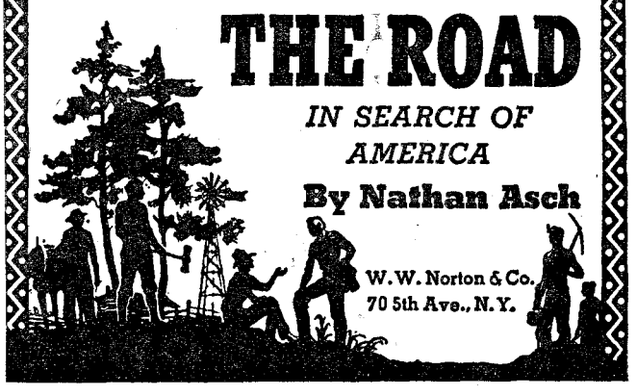

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significant in their work, Mr. Smith makes elegantly phrased references, but these turn out, after the delight in their being well made subsides, to be singularly unprovoking.

In this book, Mr. Smith rereads, with "gentle intoxication," Montaigne, Madame de Sévigné, Pater, Michael Fields, Jane Austen, the early Proust. In a long essay he states his fondness for the dubious art of aphorism and tries to establish the existence of a notable and neglected English tradition in this art; in several short essays, certain forgotten aphorists are remembered. Essays on John Donne, Jeremy Taylor and Thomas Carlyle show Mr. Smith indifferent to their preaching but sensitively pleased with their style. In two long essays, Mr. Smith attests his loyalty to Sainte-Beuve and, with elegant petulance, his displeasure with those prose theorists who are the least bit impatient with prose-poetry. W. G.

Our Rude Forefathers: American Political Verse, 1783-1788, by Louie M. Miner. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: The Torch Press. 284 pages. $3.

Here are extensive selections from the political verse produced in those troubled years between the winning of independence and the adoption of the Constitution. The book, however, is far more than an anthology. Not content with the mere assembling of poems, gleaned from old newspaper files that were found in "dozens of libraries from Maine to Georgia," the author has attempted, by consulting diaries, correspondence and pamphlets, to place the poems in their proper setting. He thus succeeds in giving us a good notion of what men were thinking and saying about such topics as foreign affairs, paper money, the Constitution. C. L. L.

Contributors

MARY HEATON VORSE has long been interested in the labor movement as a novelist, journalist and organizer. Her autobiography, "A Footnote to Folly," was published last year by Farrar and Rinehart.

CARLETON BEALS has written extensively on Spanish-American subjects. His books include "Mexico: An Interpretation," "The Crime of Cuba" and "Fire on the Andes."

YVOR WINTERS has written a number of books of verse, including "The Bare Hills" and "Before Disaster." He teaches English at Stanford University.

ERNEST NAGEL is assistant professor of Philosophy at Columbia University.

NATHAN ASCH is a New York novelist and critic who last year made an extensive tour of America. His findings were embodied in his latest book, "The Road: In Search of America," published on May 21 by W. W. Norton.

R. P. BLACKMUR, formerly an editor of The Hound and Horn, is the author of "The Double Agent," a book of essays. He edited a volume of Henry James's prefaces. He is a Guggenheim fellow for 1937.

WALTER PACH, the distinguished American painter and etcher, is himself the author of the recent "Vincent Van Gogh: The Man and the Artist." He is at present engaged in the editing and translation of the Journal of Eugène Delacroix.

MAURICE HINDUS has written numerous books and articles dealing with the Soviet Union. His most recent work is "Moscow Skies," a novel published last fall by Random House.

JONATHAN MITCHELL has written many articles for the New Republic dealing with politics and national affairs. He lives in Washington, D. C.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of William Gorman and Carl L. Lokke.

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